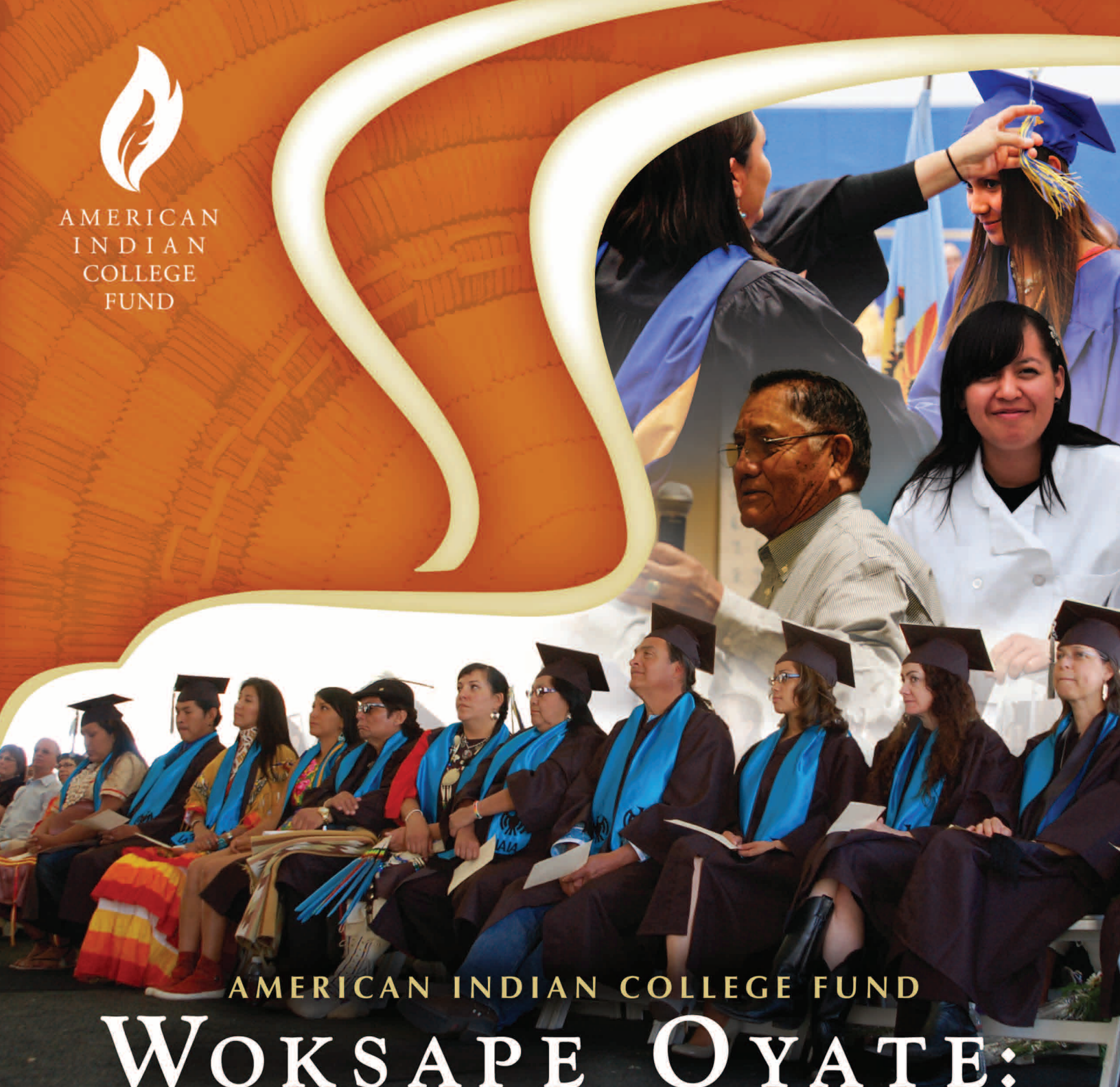




AMERICAN
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AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

WOKSAPE OYATE:

Wisdom of the People

GRANT FINAL REPORT



WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

WOKSAPE OYATE:

Wisdom of the People

STRENGTHENING INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL
AT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Final Report to
The Lilly Endowment, Inc.
August 31, 2012



AMERICAN
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WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Transformative Partnership

Since 1999, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. (Lilly) and the American Indian College Fund (the Fund) have worked together to improve higher education for Native Americans. This historic partnership began with Lilly's generous investment of \$30 million in capital construction and renovation of tribal college and university (TCU) facilities. The gift helped the Fund raise an additional \$45 million and leveraged an additional \$232.8 million in state, local, tribal and federal funding for desperately needed projects. **Campaign Sii Ha Sin** fixed leaking roofs, upgraded plumbing and heating systems, and added science laboratories, residence halls, childcare centers, classrooms, and administrative buildings.



Institute of American Indian Arts: Before and After Campaign Sii Ha Sin

Lilly helped create welcoming and beautiful environments that attracted students and raised educational hopes within tribal Nations. Next, TCUs needed to build their institutional capacities for academic excellence, create more challenging and engaging learning environments, and develop strong and effective leaders among all participants.

Woksape Oyate: Transforming the Intellectual Landscape

While the construction campaign succeeded in its objectives, it revealed concerns about organizational efficiency and effectiveness at the TCUs. The Fund approached Lilly in 2005 for help with pressing needs for improved academics and qualified personnel at these small, underfunded institutions. Lilly responded by awarding \$17.5 million for the **Woksape Oyate: Wisdom of the People** project to raise intellectual capital at the TCUs and to invest in the people who could lead the institutions forward.

Woksape Oyate granted 32 sub-awards for projects as unique and diverse as the institutions themselves. The Fund asked TCUs to focus strategies and demonstrate measurable growth in one or more of three program areas: strengthening academic programs, professional development, and recruitment and retention. It was a rare opportunity for the institutions to reflect on their current capacity to fulfill their missions and respond to strategic educational priorities for their tribal constituencies.

Project Accomplishments

The *Woksape Oyate* projects produced outstanding results. TCUs seized the opportunity to raise their intellectual capital by developing rigorous and relevant new academic programs, increasing qualifications of faculty and staff, and developing highly competent leaders among all participants.

Strengthening Academic Programs

In 2006, there were 8 TCUs that offered bachelor's degree programs, and thanks to the Lilly investment, there are now 13. These **new offerings helped TCUs meet the educational and economic development needs** of their tribal Nations and regional populations, and increased access to higher education in isolated rural areas. Four schools reached an important institutional milestone by offering their *first* bachelor's degree. There are:

- 10 new bachelor's programs at 5 TCUs
- 13 new associate's degree programs at 8 TCUs
- 8 new certificate programs at 3 TCUs

The associate's degree programs became pipelines for enrollment in new bachelor's degree programs or **set the stage for future degree development**. TCUs with new programs reported that they gained the institutional confidence needed to plan and develop more upper-level degree offerings in the future. For example, Navajo Technical College became accredited for its first bachelor's degree, with three tracks in information technology, and a new associate's degree in registered nursing. They subsequently requested permission to begin developing their first master's program and have initiated work on a new math and engineering baccalaureate degree.

New degree programs allowed TCUs to revise and integrate other academic programs and upgrade curricular content as prerequisites for upper level courses. TCUs **streamlined their institutional processes** for program and course development and approval of new curricula:

- 155 new courses created at 15 TCUs
- 23 new curricula implemented at 7 TCUs



Six faculty and staff members at Aaniiih Nakoda College completed degrees with the help of *Woksape Oyate* funding

Professional Development

The investment in human resources had a powerful impact on both immediate and long-term institutional capacity building. TCUs focused on improving teaching and learning, upgrading critical skills of key positions, and supporting employee advanced degrees. Raising skills to industry standard helped **improve organizational efficiency**. Cross-departmental training **developed abilities in institutional assessment** which supported accreditation and increased data-driven decision making. TCUs changed their strategic thinking about professional development, and many **revised human resource policies**

and procedures to become more responsive to both institutional priorities and individual position requirements.

Woksape Oyate funds supported 98 faculty and staff to complete advanced degrees including:

- 7 doctorates
- 53 master's degrees
- 24 bachelor's degrees
- 14 associate's degrees

At the grant's close, 95 TCU employees remained in progress toward degrees including:

- 21 doctorates
- 27 master's degrees
- 29 bachelor's degrees
- 18 associate's degrees

This is a remarkable achievement in a relatively short time span. **Higher educational credentials and new knowledge resulted in stronger academic programs** as well, including updated course content, new instructional technologies, and improved student services.

- 80 percent of TCUs reported increased rigor and relevance of coursework

New degrees **built morale and raised expectations for higher education** among TCU staff and within the communities they serve. Personnel that engaged in higher education inspired others to pursue degrees. It is significant that many were tribal members that had originally graduated from tribal colleges and with advanced degrees had new opportunities to teach or **advance to higher levels of leadership and responsibility**.

- 61 employees at 15 TCUs received promotions

Recruitment and Retention

The *Woksape Oyate* proposal encouraged TCUs to focus on recruitment and retention of students or faculty, or both.

Faculty and staff recruitment by TCUs led to increases in the number of **qualified Native employees**. These employees **became role models for their students** and demonstrated the importance and benefits of education.

Program funds assisted 12 institutions to recruit 70 highly qualified Native faculty, staff, or administrators and to retain 14 Native core faculty and staff. For example, *Woksape Oyate* incentives helped Fort Peck Community College recruit tribal member Dr. Florence Garcia to fill its vice president of academics vacancy. She was subsequently hired to succeed Dr. James Shanley when he retired as president after 25 years at the College.



Florence Garcia, PhD, became the new president at Fort Peck Community College

Student recruitment and retention programs fell mainly into two categories: academic support and student engagement. Academic support programs initiated **new learning centers and innovative strategies** such as peer tutoring to improve math and literacy. Sitting Bull College engaged the entire K-16 system across their reservation for collaborative training to address college readiness, and the consortium adopted a common approach to writing instruction. Progress was noted in academic outcomes, retention, and graduation.

- 9 TCUs improved math and English skills
- 7 TCUs increased student success and retention
- 5 TCUs increased grade point averages
- 12 TCUs increased graduation rates

Student engagement programs sponsored honor societies and research programs, academic competitions, formal leadership training and mentoring, and infused service learning requirements in the curriculum. Little Big Horn College offered full-ride scholarships to top high school graduates along with leadership mentoring by the president and the executive team. These **high performing students set a new standard** and **elevated faculty expectations for the academic performance of all students**. Improved student outcomes and new marketing and outreach strategies contributed to the improved academic reputations of the colleges.

- 18 TCUs reported increased enrollment, particularly for new high school graduates



Leech Lake Tribal College students received top honors in the Critical Inquiry competition at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium conference

The Fund's Growth

The Fund itself expanded its scope of influence and capacity to raise more financial support for tribal colleges and universities. Lilly funding allowed our organization to add a significant number of positions for our development teams and to revise the entire organizational structure for broader outreach to our donors across the country. As a result, **we have met and exceeded our fundraising goals** during an economic downturn. The *Woksape Oyate* scholarship program provided its first 10 awards to deserving students, and the Lilly scholarship endowment will continue in perpetuity. The generosity of Lilly has helped to secure the future of the Fund, and thereby helped ensure funding for

years to come for thousands of American Indian students who seek higher education and better lives for their families and communities.

Building Institutional Capacity

It is clear that the Lilly investment in intellectual capital at tribal institutions of higher learning met and exceeded expectations in every area. The grant made an enormous impact on leadership capacity. Presidents improved executive management skills, boards learned their appropriate roles and relationships in a higher education setting, and faculty degrees led to higher expectations for teaching and improved assessment of learning. Students are more highly engaged and better prepared for advanced degree work in mainstream institutions and leadership roles in their fields and in their Native Nations.

The project truly captured the intellectual spirit that is inherent at each of these culturally distinctive institutions. Today, TCUs are much more efficient and effective in fulfilling their missions as institutions of higher learning. TCUs became centers of excellence that provided challenging and responsive learning environments to fire the imagination of the next generation. Because of *Woksape Oyate*, these colleges and universities provide appropriate, rigorous education that is on par with mainstream education and that meets standard accreditation requirements. Indeed, the *Woksape Oyate* project grew the wisdom of the people and instilled hope for realizing greater educational aspirations to build the social and economic well-being of Native America.



Project leads and presidents gather from 32 tribal colleges to learn best practices in project evaluation

INTRODUCTION

The *Woksape Oyate*: Wisdom of the People Grant

This report captures the returns on the \$17.5 million that Lilly Endowment, Inc. (Lilly) invested in America's tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) and in the organizational capacity of the American Indian College Fund (the Fund). The sections that follow document the outcomes of individual components of the grant, including the \$2.25 million for the Fund's organizational capacity building, the \$1 million for the Lilly scholarship endowment, and the overall impact of the \$14.25 million invested across the three program areas to build intellectual capital at TCUs.

The Fund's Proposal to the Lilly Endowment

The Fund proposed an initiative to increase intellectual capital or "the collective knowledge, experience, and capacity" located within America's tribal colleges and universities. The grant intended to improve the ability of each institution to "demand excellence, deliver a high quality education, and provide an environment where ideas are born and exchanged." Primarily, the project sought to foster leadership by investing in "the people who work at and believe in these institutions, namely the presidents, faculty, staff, and students."

The Proposal Process

Upon notification of the Lilly award, the Fund invited each eligible TCU to apply for grant funding, and offered \$10,000 planning grants upon receipt of letters of intent. TCUs could request up to \$700,000 over five years for programs in one or more of three strategic areas: strengthening academic programs, professional development, or recruitment and retention. The Fund expected TCUs to identify institutional development needs and supporting data, and detail program goals and objectives, a budget narrative, and an evaluation plan that would capture the impact of activities on institutional capacity.

The Award Process

A panel of five experts from diverse sectors reviewed and rated the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. Readers recommended resubmission or additional information from all TCUs, and several schools received technical assistance to strengthen their proposals. The Fund awarded 28 TCUs in the first round: 7 received \$700,000, 14 received \$400,000, and 7 received \$250,000. Four more institutions received \$150,000 in year three: two newly eligible institutions and two more that were previously denied. In all, 32 TCUs received *Woksape Oyate* funding to build their intellectual capital. Only one eligible TCU, Ilisagvik College, decided not to reapply after an initial rejection.

Funding for Presidents' Professional Development

The Fund found that TCU presidents initially had only modestly invested in developing their own leadership capacity. Therefore, the Fund encouraged presidents to request an additional amount of up to \$10,000 for their own professional development or if near retirement, to plan for succession. The Fund also invited Ilisagvik College's new president to participate in this funding and awarded 25 presidents (see Addendum pg. 222).

Supplemental Project Awards

The Lilly grant agreement stipulated that unbudgeted award monies would be redistributed to TCU projects. Lilly had approved a revised budget in year one to provide for TCUs that might become eligible for funding during the grant cycle. Fewer TCUs qualified than anticipated, and some award funds remained. Therefore, the Fund extended a second request for proposals to strengthen and sustain successful program activities. The Fund's external reviewers read 23 supplemental proposals and recommended 6 for awards ranging from \$56,994 to \$100,000. The Fund rescinded one supplemental award after one year because staff turnover impeded its implementation.

In the final year, the Fund allowed all TCUs to apply for up to \$10,000 to help close the grant and made 28 such awards. Appropriate activities included consultant fees for final evaluation and reporting, additional president leadership development, travel to the *Woksape Oyate* Summit, and video documentation of the project.

Gathering the Data

The Fund conducted site visits to each project, encouraged continuous evaluation, and tracked outcome data from semi-annual reports. We expected that institutions funded at the highest level would have the greatest gain, but this was not always the case. Some of the projects that realized the greatest impact were found at smaller institutions with more focused projects. For example, two colleges funded at the lowest level had tremendous returns on investment in professional development. At Bay Mills Community College, 14 employees received funding for advanced degrees, 9 completed degrees, and 6 were promoted to higher levels of leadership. At Navajo Technical College, 23 employees received scholarships for degree work, 8 completed degrees, and 7 advanced in responsibility. The advanced credentials of faculty in the information technology department supported accreditation for its first bachelor's degree program. With just \$250,000, Fort Peck Community College supported advanced degrees, provided incentives for recruiting and retaining qualified faculty, trained its entire faculty and staff in best practices for student engagement, and implemented service-learning requirements for all first year courses. One hundred percent of students who engaged in leadership programs involving service learning were retained.

Institutional attitude toward the importance of the award, persistence in evaluating outcomes and revising strategies, and the willingness to engage a broad effort across the campus made the difference in how a particular institution accomplished its goals. Those that leveraged the grant planning, implementation, and evaluation processes to improve institutional infrastructure enjoyed the greatest impact and more sustainable outcomes. TCUs that took time to analyze how grant funding supported institutional priorities and strategic needs found ways to integrate the funding to deepen the effect of other initiatives.

Despite differences in levels of development, maturity, and capacity, TCUs all share a common purpose: to build tribal Nations and strengthen tribal sovereignty through appropriate and rigorous education. The unfolding story of *Woksape Oyate* shows the true genius and character of these small, relatively young institutions of higher education and the people they employ and serve.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES

This section establishes the summative gains in intellectual capital made across the 32 TCU projects during the five years of the *Woksape Oyate* program. The outcome data from individual TCU projects truly revealed full details by program area and for overall institutional capacity and credibility.

The year five interim and final TCU reports and presentations at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit on Intellectual Capital completed the Fund's ongoing data collection to capture the overall return on investment. At times during the analysis, it was difficult to separate results into succinct categories. Growth in one area logically affected other areas of institutional functioning. For instance, professional development strengthened academic programs, and stronger programs attracted and retained more students and highly qualified faculty.

The Fund is keenly aware that the numerical data alone does not tell the entire story of the "Wisdom of the People" or intellectual capital realized under *Woksape Oyate*. The individual TCU chapters will reveal full details of the *qualitative* impact of this historic project in the immediate term and help predict the long-term and sustainable effects of the Lilly investment at each TCU.

Strengthening Academic Programs

The *Woksape Oyate* grant produced its intended effects in the area of strengthening academic programs and went beyond expectations for elevating the quality of education at TCUs. The **main indicators of increased academic capacity are the number and the relevance of new degree or certificate programs** developed. Bachelor's degrees are of particular importance as these increase accessibility to higher levels of education within or near tribal communities.

The project provided direct support to launch **10 new bachelor's degree programs** at 5 institutions. For four TCUs, the new degrees represented institutional milestones as the very first accredited bachelor's degree programs. United Tribes Technical College obtained accreditation for its first three bachelor's degrees in education, criminal justice, and business. Fort Berthold Community College received approval for three first-time baccalaureate programs in education, environmental science, and Native Studies. Sisseton Wahpeton College's first time bachelor's degree in education is in the accreditation process. Early in the grant cycle, the College of Menominee Nation had received approval for its first bachelor's degree in education and received notification in May 2012 that the two new bachelor's programs developed with *Woksape Oyate* support also gained accreditation. The new programs included a bachelor's degree in public administration and one in business. Navajo Technical College received approval for three tracks of study in its first bachelor's degree in information technology.

The Lilly grant provided these small institutions with **the experience and confidence to tackle accreditation processes and to envision and develop new programs**. Several colleges reported that with new bachelor's degrees in place, they are beginning to dream of master's and doctoral degrees, or of university status. TCUs also found that each **new associate's degree created a framework and pathway for building future baccalaureate programs**. For example, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) recently reviewed Navajo Technical College's plan to move forward with a new associate's degree in mathematics that will provide the pipeline for a proposed new bachelor's degree in engineering. In addition, the **new degrees are relevant to building local**

economies and community well-being as they meet educational needs identified by the local constituents. New programs and courses completed:

- 10 new bachelor's degree programs at 5 TCUs
- 13 new associate's degree programs at 8 TCUs
- 8 new certificate programs at 3 TCUs

New degree offerings naturally **increased institutional capacity to develop, review, approve, and offer a large number of new courses**. There were:

- 155 new courses created by 15 TCUs
- 23 new curricula created or implemented by 7 TCUs

The TCUs reported that **new programs streamlined and improved their institutional processes**. There are more effective committee structures, new procedures, and more efficient ways of working. Upgrading academic offerings required TCUs to provide additional professional development for key staff members and many TCUs focused on raising the credentials of tribal members. Thus, several TCUs reported **increased institutional capacity to provide effective and rigorous culture-based education, which is the essential goal of tribal higher education**.

Professional Development

Researchers find that professional development outcomes are difficult to measure at the institutional level because of multiple intervening variables. The Fund challenged TCUs continuously to find ways to evaluate the institutional impact of professional development activities funded by the grant.

By far, **the most meaningful outcome of the Lilly investment in professional development is the number of TCU employee degrees completed and in progress**. The *Woksape Oyate* grants funded employee tuition, travel, and other type of instrumental support, and thereby helped to remove employees' perceived and real barriers to accomplishing educational goals.

TCUs that supported employee degrees found it necessary to **rethink human resource** practices, policies, and professional development plans, and to extend educational leave. Therefore, **TCUs became better employers as they changed the campus cultures to those that supported continuous learning**. They thus positioned themselves for employee satisfaction, and consequently, for increased institutional stability.

There were **98 employee degrees completed**, including:

- 7 doctorates
- 53 master's degrees
- 24 bachelor's degrees
- 14 associate's degrees

There are **95 employee degrees in progress**, including:

- 21 doctorates
- 27 master's degrees
- 29 bachelor's degrees
- 18 associate's degrees

In addition to advanced degrees, **8 employees completed professional certifications** required for teaching or working in their fields. Advanced credentials and professional development resulted in **improved job performance for 255 employees at 12 TCUs**. Concerning leadership development, increased competence and preparation resulted in **61 employees at 15 institutions advancing to new levels of responsibility**. The recipients of professional development inspired innovations in institutional infrastructure that helped the **TCUs do a better job of serving students**. For example, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College's financial aid staff acquired training that qualified the College to offer federal grants for the first time.



Three Little Big Horn College administrators received MBAs in 2010: Beverly Snell, financial aid director; Teatta Old Bear, dean of students; Aldean Goodluck, chief financial officer

Professional development not only improved institutional efficiency, it also **raised the level of academic excellence**. TCUs reported that the return to higher education inspired faculty creativity and thereby improved the classroom experience. Faculty members who pursued advanced degrees returned the investment by initiating new degree programs, providing up-to-date content, engaging in new teaching methods, and contributing to increasingly competent assessment. At Sinte Gleska University, for example, one instructor completed her doctorate and began immediately to develop the institution's first master's degree in business. At Stone Child College, a project recipient completed a bachelor's degree and the College hired him to teach art. He helped develop a new associate's degree program in fine arts. In

combination, **12 TCUs implemented 36 new teaching methods**, and **80 percent indicated that professional development increased the rigor and quality of coursework**.

Several TCUs focused faculty professional development efforts on increasing cultural understanding. Because of culture-specific training, both non-Native and Native faculty members showed **improved ability and confidence to integrate Indigenous concepts in classrooms and in learner assessments**. This cultural competence contributed to **increased institutional pride and identification as true tribal institutions of higher learning**. The TCUs reported that enhanced ability to provide cultural and linguistic content in the curricula also **supported accreditation**, and contributed to the **increased enrollment** in Native language courses at 11 schools.

Many TCUs reported that professional development **increased employee morale** (77 percent) and **raised expectations about educational attainment**. The Fund was gratified to discover that many of the **new Woksape Oyate-funded degree recipients started their academic careers at tribal colleges**. It is clear that TCUs targeted employees for advanced degrees in order to promote advancement from within, and **many were tribal members** who previously had been unable to complete degree work. Thus, professional development outcomes have an immediate and positive effect on **future leadership capacity** within tribal colleges, communities, and tribal Nations.

When asked about sustainability, the TCUs identified a challenge in obtaining future funding that will support employee degree work already in progress. Structural and policy changes that support education leave opened the door for continued work. Even without specific funding resources, TCU employees expressed determination to persist and complete their degrees. The Fund hopes to capitalize on the tremendous growth in TCU staff with advanced credentials. We plan to seek additional fellowship opportunities that will complement the Fund's existing programs supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The TCU scholars funded

by *Woksape Oyate* will contribute new research to expand Indigenous knowledge for the betterment of Native Nations. In this way, the Lilly project helped to generate powerful outcomes that will inspire generosity among future donors and stimulate new funding opportunities for American Indian higher education.

TCU President Professional Development

The *Woksape Oyate* grant **invested in leadership development for 25 presidents** and thereby increased their ability to **generate excellence** at their institutions. Professional development activities allowed three presidents to **prepare for succession** and to prioritize goals. For example, President Verna Fowler of College of Menominee Nation consulted with one college president and a retired TCU president. She reported that their advice led to the restructuring of the College's entire administration and leadership teams to make them more effective, sustainable, and ready the institution for presidential succession.



Dr. Luana Ross, president at Salish Kootenai College

Three presidents attended the **Harvard Seminar for New Presidents** and found it gave them the guidance and direction they needed to determine the next steps of their presidency. Newly appointed president, Dr. Luana Ross of Salish Kootenai College said of her experience at Harvard:

“The networking alone was worth attending the Harvard Institute. Many mainstream university president are extremely interested in working collaboratively with tribal colleges. However, at the Institute we were also instructed on hiring and firing, management issues, qualities of a good leader, qualities of a successful transition, qualities of a successful president, and so on. Additionally, we were instructed on the importance of fundraising and the critical need for a public relations person. These are areas that I will focus on for improvement. Paramount, however, was the confidence I gained to go forward and be the best president I can.”

Six presidents reported that their activities provided them valuable opportunities to **learn the latest “best practices” for building Indigenous academic programs**. Six presidents attended the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education in the summer of 2011. The conference offered them the opportunity to connect with their worldwide peers in Indigenous education, and to gain new perspectives on teaching Native languages and infusing culture into the curriculum.

Four presidents engaged in international academic exchanges in Europe and Turkey and with Indigenous college presidents in New Zealand, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates. President Martin also established a memorandum of understanding for student scholarships, and cultural and educational exchanges with Istanbul Technical University in Turkey. Dr. David Gipp of United Tribes Technical College was an invited participant in the European Higher Education Study for United States and Canada. A cohort of 12 American college and university presidents met with European higher education leaders and learned about the Bologna Process for integrating and coordinating diverse systems across the European Union (EU). Dr. Gipp presented the model at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit president's convening and to the American Indian Higher Education

Consortium. He plans to publish a paper showing how TCUs might build a confederated system modeled after the EU.

Three presidents who pursued **advanced degree work** said their studies **brought credibility to their institutions and to themselves as leaders**. Two more presidents spent time doing independent research on developing innovative and culturally relevant models for tribal higher education. Ten presidents utilized leadership funding for specific training related to **executive management functions** in higher education including fundraising, technology, grant management, crisis leadership, and financial management. Overall, the presidents reported that the impact of their activities is far reaching within their institutions and communities. Their experiences helped to **prepare future TCU leaders through mentoring** and increased the value placed on providing appropriate training for these leaders.

Recruitment and Retention

Fifteen TCUs implemented **new strategies** for recruitment and retention of either students or faculty. Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College received funding for three years and focused exclusively on student retention. Many projects funded for multiple areas found that strengthened academic programs and well-prepared staff increased their ability to attract and retain students.

TCUs realized that to build intellectual capital, they needed to **hire faculty best qualified to address the academic and cultural needs of their students**. Most TCUs find that Native faculty members are a good “cultural fit” and are generally willing to make the kind of commitment required to sustain their work over time. TCUs wanted to increase these numbers in order to **ensure Native leadership for the future and to add positive educational role models** for students and communities. *Woksape Oyate* funds assisted 12 TCUs in **hiring 70 new Native employees and retaining 14 current Native employees**. Educated tribal members with strong cultural identities gave students hope and changed some of the historically negative perceptions about education within the communities TCUs serve.

Eleven TCUs reported that grant activities **improved public perception and awareness** about their offerings. The grant provided funding to create new public relations campaigns and recruitment materials, and 18 TCUs reported positive implications for enrollment.



In the past, high school counselors were more likely to refer Native graduates to mainstream colleges and universities, but this is changing. New outreach strategies helped **nine schools attract more high school graduates to the local TCU as first choice** for higher education. This is very significant because of the history of early failure for tribal students going directly from high school to mainstream colleges and universities. Upon graduation from TCUs, students are better equipped with the skills and confidence needed for advanced degree completion at mainstream institutions.

The *Woksape Oyate* programs helped several TCUs to create more **engaging learning environments and to improve academic success and retention**. The *Washington Monthly* ranked **Leech Lake Tribal College (LLTC)** as the seventh best among community colleges in America in 2010. According to LLTC’s president, the **peer-tutoring program** developed under the *Woksape Oyate* grant

improved student engagement and contributed in large measure to this status. The ranking also considered LLTC's graduation rates of 72 percent, which improved during their grant cycle as well.

Woksape Oyate recruitment and retention activities showed the following encouraging trends over the course of the project:

- 9 TCUs improved math and English skills
- 7 TCUs increased success and retention
- 5 TCUs increased grade point averages
- 2 TCUs increased attendance
- 12 TCUs increased graduation rates



Several other *Woksape Oyate* programs used recruitment and retention funding to enhance student engagement. For example, Fort Peck Community College integrated service learning in all courses, provided professional development in best practices for student engagement, and now requires all staff to mentor a cohort of students. Navajo Technical College started a chapter of a national honor society, and their grant provided additional opportunities for students to participate in leadership training, service learning, and academic competitions.

Increasing Institutional Capacity

The *Woksape Oyate* project generated an unanticipated excitement and new energy across the tribal college movement that TCUs frequently described as “transformational.”

Blackfeet Community College found that the grant's greatest return on investment was “a heightening of the spirit of creativity and motivation” among its partners to “resolve intellectual challenges.” The accomplishments in the three funding areas tell the story of improved institutional capacity of the TCUs to fulfill their unique missions.

The outcome data demonstrates the ways that **TCUs continue to improve overall institutional effectiveness for academic excellence.** Professional development and advanced degrees contributed to improved instructional practices, assessment, and increased cultural relevance in curricula and course materials. Faculty members have a better understanding of the Native experience, which promoted productive relationships with students, colleagues, and community stakeholders. Enhanced cultural content, along with new technology-based delivery methods increased access to higher education for remote tribal communities.

Many TCUs also reported **improved organizational functioning and efficiency** because of professional development activities. Among 16 TCUs, there were **50 new positions created** that addressed a variety of gaps in service and staff were prepared to fill these roles.

Because of professional development offered at TCUs:

- 82 % improved efficiency of operations
- 75 % increased employee participation in shared governance activities
- 85 % improved or new student support services
- 91 % improved capacity for assessment

Professional development for assessment is especially timely and critical given the increasing demand on institutions to provide evidence of success for accreditation. Exactly half of the *Woksape Oyate* projects reported that grant training activities positively supported accreditation processes. As well, TCUs reported that increased capacity for cultural inclusion improved their ability to help students succeed. Expanded organizational infrastructure and improved efficiency had a positive impact on accreditation.



Institutional Credibility

The *Woksape Oyate* projects helped improve institutional credibility at 94 percent of TCUs.

Professional development for employees contributed to **improved reputations for the colleges.** Sixteen institutions reported that advanced degrees for tribal members raised expectations for educational attainment at their schools and within the communities that they serve. **Tribal leaders and elders, who had previously been reticent to get involved at the TCUs, became**

essential partners in program development. The involvement of traditional knowledge-keepers contributed to increased community access to Indigenous histories, cultures, and languages at 20 TCUs. The evidence of improved credibility is the number of **new partnerships** formed because of the grant.

- 21 new business partnerships formed at 8 TCUs
- 51 total new community partnerships entered into by 13 TCUs
- 41 new academic partnerships formalized by 15 TCUs

At half of the TCUs, the projects promoted increased **dissemination of new knowledge, research, or models for best practices in teaching and learning.** This is a key factor for TCUs' academic credibility both in their communities and in the realm of higher education.

INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING AT THE AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

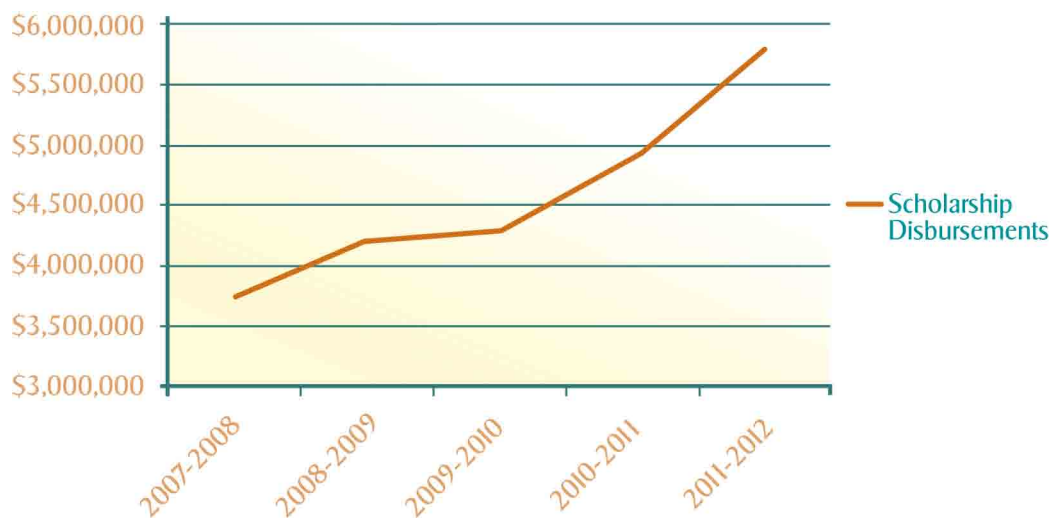
Lilly awarded a portion of the *Woksape Oyate: Wisdom of the People* grant to the Fund for its own capacity building. The Fund requested a budget of \$2.25 million to build its capacity through new positions, professional development, and \$1 million to establish a scholarship endowment. This section describes the positive outcomes of these three aspects of the *Woksape Oyate* project, as well as lessons the Fund learned for the future about effectively administering scholarship programs and complex, multi-year grants.

Organizational Capacity Building

Financial resources are increasingly limited for both the Fund and for TCUs. Fundraising and program administration have become more complex and challenging across the non-profit sector during the recent economic downturn. Private donors who were once willing to donate unrestricted funds to the overall mission of the Fund now place significant limits on their gifts. TCUs continue to receive limited support from federal and state funding sources, and recent federal budget cuts decreased per-student allowances. Moreover, proposals continue to surface that would eliminate all federal funds that benefit tribal colleges. At the same time, the TCUs report tremendous growth in enrollment, meaning that the scarce funds available must stretch even further.

In the context of these limited resources, the Fund needed to hire more development personnel to meet the ever-growing needs of tribal colleges and their students. Internal capacity building monies from Lilly allowed us to make critical hires and other improvements in staffing while keeping administrative costs low. In turn, more money could flow to student scholarships. Overall, the number of employees almost doubled between 2006 and 2012, with several positions funded by the Lilly grant. For example, during the grant period, the organization expanded to include a vice-president of resource development. This position allows for better coordination across fundraising teams to meet our strategic objectives. The Fund also hired new team members in each of our three resource development departments. As a result, we were able to increase our fundraising revenue and grow the amount awarded in scholarships from \$3.7 million in 2007-2008 to over \$5.5 million in 2011-2012. Revenue growth allowed the Fund to take over the funding of the staff positions initially added through the Lilly investment, and all positions will be sustained beyond the grant period.

Capacity building funds also supported new staff positions in our operations and scholarships departments. The Fund was able to increase contact with TCUs and students, which helped us to gather the types of data that demonstrate returns on donors' investments. We increased our investment in marketing efforts, bringing greater public awareness about TCUs and the scholarships the Fund provides. We also increased our outreach to American Indian students, and in 2012 we experienced a 600 percent increase in scholarship applications. This reenergized the Fund in our efforts to grow our fundraising capacity so that we may increase our ability to meet the significant financial needs of Native students.



Scholarship disbursements 2007-2012

The addition of new staff and the growth in organizational capacity positioned us to obtain significant new grants. In 2011, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation awarded the Fund \$300,000 for six TCU faculty fellowships to complete masters’ or doctoral degrees in the science, engineering, and math areas. As the *Woksape Oyate* projects at TCUs end, the new grants will help continue the Lilly legacy of supporting masters’ degrees for TCU employees. In 2010, the Fund received a competitive \$5 million, five-year award from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to create innovative early childhood education programs at four tribal college centers.

Professional Development

In order for the Fund to accomplish its mission, it is equally important that we develop existing staff. Support from new administrative staff hired under the Lilly grant allowed the executive team to devote more time to examining its overall staffing patterns and approach to professional development.

The Fund experienced turnover in the past due in part to lack of opportunities for advancement. One challenge in filling positions was a lack of potential employees with fundraising experience in the field of Indian higher education and non-profit organizations that serve American Indian people. The executive team realized that the Fund needed a new approach to retain and develop talented staff.

The Fund’s leadership devised a new organizational structure that created more opportunities for promotion among current staff. Managers identify talented staff members to mentor for roles with greater responsibility, while encouraging considerable collaboration and training across departments. The Fund also provides opportunities for individuals to obtain outside training for job-specific roles and responsibilities as needed, and partially reimburses employees for tuition for advanced degrees. Team dynamics and management training are critical areas of organizational functioning, and the Fund applies resources to address these areas to ensure a positive and productive working environment.

The Woksape Oyate Scholarship Endowment

A premise of the Lilly grant is growing leadership for the enrichment of the colleges, among students, and within tribal Nations. The **Woksape Oyate** grant provided for an endowed scholarship to help TCUs recruit and retain the most talented students within their own communities. Tribal colleges often find that mainstream universities recruit the best and brightest in their Nations and award these students prestigious scholarships. Many times these same students return home without completing their courses because the universities fail to provide appropriate support.

To help top performing students decide to enroll in tribal colleges, the Fund offers two endowed Lilly scholarships: the generous *Distinguished Scholar* award to high school graduates in the top 10 percent of his or her graduating class, and the *Keepers of the Next Generation* award, for high performing single mothers already enrolled at a TCU. Each recipient receives \$8,000 annually and has the opportunity to renew the scholarship for up to four years. The **Woksape Oyate** scholarships are among the largest the Fund offers and are on par with mainstream scholarships. The Fund awarded scholarships to 10 students at 7 TCUs since 2008. Five received the *Distinguished Scholar* award and five received the *Keepers of the Next Generation* award (see Addendum pg. 218).

The Fund found that the high-performing students selected for the Lilly scholarships fulfilled expectations for return on investment. All **Woksape Oyate** scholars persisted in their education and improved their confidence as capable students. They inspired their peers and raised educational expectations for their children, communities, and other students. The Fund is pleased that the endowment established through Lilly resources will continue to fund the scholarship program well beyond the life of this grant.

The Fund's Capacity for Project Administration

When the Fund approached Lilly in 2005 with the concept of funding intellectual capital at TCUs, it was operating with a relatively small staff. Despite this, the Fund had a number of strengths that positioned it well to administer the grant. The Fund's expertise, its visionary leadership, and its relationships with donors were key factors in its confidence to apply for such a large grant. Our President and CEO, Richard B. Williams, has a strong guiding vision based on his practical knowledge of the strengths and challenges at TCUs. In addition, his previous knowledge of Lilly's priorities helped the foundations and projects teams successfully apply for the **Woksape Oyate** funding, stay on target to fulfill the Fund's obligations, and meet Lilly's expectations for return on investment.



Richard B. Williams

Although the Fund's original project officer left in the middle of the first project year, the Fund hired a new project officer who remained consistent throughout the remainder of the project. Dr. Deborah Esquibel Hunt provided stability in spite of other changes in support staff and organizational structure. The stability in project leadership meant that TCUs could rely on their relationship with the Fund and feel confident about receiving the technical assistance needed to navigate program requirements. Dr. Hunt has a background in higher education and held high expectations for the TCUs. She encouraged the projects to do their best, meet

their goals, and look toward a long-term vision as they developed their unique wisdom and institutional capacities.

The grant provided for an external evaluator to evaluate the overall success of the project. The Fund hired Dr. Holly YoungBear-Tibbetts who had broad experience in program evaluation and tribal college administration. She provided continuous feedback that helped the Fund develop best practices for project management. Finally, we appreciated the combined watchfulness and flexibility of the Lilly project officer and her team. Lilly offered clear, proactive communication and constructive feedback that helped the Fund guide the TCU projects to accomplish their goals.



Deborah Esquibel Hunt

Project Administration Challenges for the Fund

A project of this scope and duration is likely to experience many changes. The Fund encountered numerous unanticipated challenges as it implemented its internal project plan. For example, we discovered a lack of formal management protocols that easily transferred to a project of this size. With multiple rounds of proposals, three program areas, four levels of funding, and three supplemental award processes, the *Woksape Oyate* grant may well be the most complex venture the Fund administered to date. The grant created a new learning curve for the Fund in its project management capability.

The Fund always has the challenge of meeting the diverse needs of a group of institutions of higher learning that differ broadly in purpose, site, and situation. The Fund wanted to acknowledge this diversity, and we encouraged flexibility in defining intellectual capital. The Fund offered \$10,000 planning grants to help TCUs design programs that honored and expanded their own strengths, and the Fund's president made personal visits to promote the grant. He encouraged TCUs to secure external consultants who might assist in developing their proposals. However, most TCUs chose to write proposals internally, and many of the proposals did not meet the expected quality in the first review.

The Fund's External Review Committee recommended that all TCUs amend at least some elements and resubmit their plans. This rewrite process delayed the initiation of several programs and caused several TCUs to under expend their first year budgets. With unanticipated carryover requests, the Fund implemented budget change procedures. The challenges ultimately led to the Fund's request for a project extension, which Lilly approved. This extension was very helpful in accomplishing the project's objectives and evaluation of outcomes.

The Fund found another challenge in designing appropriate reporting templates that would help capture the complexity of project outcomes. The concept of intellectual capital demanded very thoughtful responses from TCUs regarding the institutional level impact of programs. The external evaluator helped design the appropriate questions, and the responses met the expectations in most cases. The Fund required interim progress reports twice annually, which created very large and complex outcome data sets. The Fund found ways to summarize common themes found within large amounts of diverse data without sacrificing the intellectual essence of each unique institution.

The project changed the way the Fund interacts with TCUs because the *Woksape Oyate* grant required the TCUs to respond with a higher level of accountability than they had experienced in the past. Therefore, the Fund spent a good deal of time developing positive working relationships,

providing technical assistance, and coaching. The *Woksape Oyate* project raised the bar for future project reporting and accountability at TCUs.

The Fund's own donor reporting capacity needed refinement and improvement. There was an initial challenge in the Fund's ability to stay focused on donor-driven outcomes. TCUs and the Fund were excited initially about early growth in academic programs that emphasized language and culture because positive changes in this area support the missions of tribal colleges. As the project progressed, the increased focus on all three program area goals and proposed outcomes helped both the TCUs and the Fund maximize successful results.

Project Management Lessons Learned

The challenges and solutions generated throughout the *Woksape Oyate* project taught the Fund to expect complicated data analysis in projects with multiple funding areas. With future large projects, the Fund will require more staff development in the area of program design, evaluation of the sub-awards and tracking of the outcome data. This means the Fund should request larger budgets for project administrative costs, including frequent travel to project sites for face-to-face evaluation and assistance.

The Fund will consider structuring projects with a first year planning phase for eligible institutions. Prior to distributing the request for proposals, the Fund could offer informational meetings with potential recipients to ensure clear understanding about objectives, evaluation strategies, and the expected return on investment. The Fund found that *Woksape Oyate* project meetings provided common training and technical assistance for more consistent project performance and results.

Standardized templates for reporting and tracking outcomes evolved over the life of the grant. The Fund learned from this grant that upfront instructions with potential recipients, the promotion of common understanding of terms, and standardization of reporting protocols are essential to facilitate the management of such a large number of projects over multiple years. The project officer for the new Kellogg grant incorporated the practice of standardized protocols. In fact, she reported that one college requested guidelines and templates such as those they had come to expect from the Lilly grant.

Overall, the *Woksape Oyate* grant created a demand for enormous growth in the project management skills and procedures of the Fund and increased capacity for administrating large, multi-faceted programs. It is significant that the project raised the Fund's expectations of TCUs to demonstrate return on investment with grant-funded projects. *Woksape Oyate* elevated expectations for the quality and depth of project evaluation, including measurable outcomes, types of measures obtained, and anticipated impact of activity on strengthening institutional capacity. This project pushed the TCUs for higher-order thinking about project planning, management, and reporting, and the Fund's project staff came to expect increased excellence in project management by the TCUs.

CLOSING STATEMENT

The generous funding from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. has given TCUs the time and space to think critically and creatively about their unique legacies, capacities, and challenges. In the process they have honed their visions, engaged their intellectual spirit, and thereby enlarged their institutional self-concepts and credibility. This ability to reflect and develop according to strategic needs is an important benefit of funding from private donors, and the recipients are extremely grateful to Lilly for the opportunity to define and develop their own intellectual capital.

The creative programs developed under the *Woksape Oyate* grant helped TCUs become true centers of excellence that are attracting top performing students and highly qualified faculty. Leaders emerged at all levels of the institutions, including boards, executive teams, presidents, academic departments, student services, and students. The new academic programs provide increased access to higher education and address critical social and economic needs, and opened new funding opportunities. TCUs strengthened their processes for developing new courses and degree programs, and new dreams for advanced educational offerings emerged. The faculty improved their ability to engage and challenge students with up-to-date instructional methods and content in their fields. Coursework is more rigorous and more relevant to tribal experience, and Native languages are on the path to preservation. Professional development boosted employee morale and helped improve institutional effectiveness and efficiency across all departments. TCUs strengthened shared governance processes and investment in generating excellence across the institutions. Institutions are better prepared to assess outcomes, link these to strategic plans, and meet accreditation standards. Tribal governments, community members, and educational partners are more involved in the process of higher learning and tribal Nations have raised their expectations for educational attainment. Students are increasingly prepared to reach their intellectual, social, and cultural potential and advance to higher degree programs. More tribal members are qualified and confident to lead their institutions, community organizations, and agencies toward future growth and stability.

The Fund is grateful that Lilly had confidence in our organization to administer this project. The Fund grew in its ability to manage large and complex projects, and we will capture and share the lessons learned to benefit new ventures. The portion of the award dedicated to developing our own capacity allowed us to add new positions and positioned us for a new regional plan for expanding and focusing our fundraising efforts. The Lilly investment will continue to grow through the endowed scholarship program and outstanding students will be the ultimate legacy of the *Woksape Oyate: Wisdom of the People* project.



American Indian College Fund staff



WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

ADDENDA

- ***Woksape Oyate* Funding Chart**
- **Tribal College and University Project Summaries**
- ***Woksape Oyate* Scholarship Report**
- **TCU President Leadership Development Activities**
- **Financial Report**

WOKSAPE OYATE FUNDING CHART

Tribal College	Total Disbursed	Supplemental	President Leadership Development	Grant Closeout Funding	Academic Programs	Professional Development	Recruitment & Retention
Seven \$700K Awards							
College of Menominee Nation	\$700,000	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	X	X	
Little Big Horn College	\$700,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	X
Oglala Lakota College	\$700,000	-	\$9,900	\$10,000	X	X	
Sitting Bull College	\$700,000	-	\$9,489	\$10,000	X	X	X
Stone Child College	\$700,000	\$56,994	\$7,033	\$10,000		X	X
Tohono O'odham Community College	\$693,963	-	*	*	X	X	X
United Tribes Technical College	\$700,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000	X		X
Fourteen \$400K Awards							
Aaniih Nakoda College	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	X
Blackfeet Community College	\$400,000	-	*	\$10,000	X	X	X
Cankdeska Cikana Community College	\$400,000	-	\$5,900	\$10,000	X		X
Chief Dull Knife College	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	X	X	
Fort Berthold Community College	\$400,000	-	\$6,874	\$10,000	X		X
Institute of American Indian Arts	\$400,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000	X		X
Lac Courte de Oreilles Community College	\$396,868	-	\$5,185	\$10,000		X	
Leech Lake Tribal College	\$400,000	\$48,586	\$3,565	\$10,000	X	X	X
Little Priest Tribal College	\$381,773	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	
Nebraska Indian Community College	\$400,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000	X		
Northwest Indian College	\$400,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	X
Salish Kootenai College	\$395,682	\$100,000	\$9,341	\$10,000		X	
Sinte Gleska University	\$396,100	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	
Sisseton Wahpeton College	\$400,000	-	*	\$9,975	X		X
Seven \$250K Awards							
Bay Mills Community College	\$250,000	-	*	\$10,000		X	
Diné College	\$260,000	-	*	\$10,000	X	X	
Fort Peck Community College	\$250,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	X
Haskell Indian Nations University	\$250,000	-	*	*	X	X	X
Navajo Technical College	\$219,241		\$10,000	\$9,830		X	X
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College	\$250,000	-	*	*	X		
Turtle Mountain Community College	\$241,253	-	\$10,000	*		X	
Four \$150,000 Awards							
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	\$131,881	-	*	\$10,000			X
Keweenaw Bay Community College	\$150,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute	\$150,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	
White Earth Tribal and Community College	\$150,000	-	\$10,000	\$10,000		X	

* None requested ■ 1 Program Area ■ 2 Program Areas ■ 3 Program Areas



TRIBAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROJECT SUMMARIES



AANIIH NAKODA
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Telling the Wisdom Story

“ Growing our own intellectual capacity enhances the lives of everyone. When we plant the seeds of wisdom, knowledge, and culture into the fertile soil of our homeland, we harvest a more fruitful future for all. Growing our own to utilize our homegrown resources increases the leadership and value of our people. Sharing these attributes within the community creates a dynamic future with more opportunities for sustainable growth.”

- Rebecca Bishop,
Outreach Coordinator

AANIHH NAKODA COLLEGE

Harlem, Montana

\$400,000; Supplemental \$100,000

Recruitment and Retention, Professional Development

Identified Need

Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC or the College) saw that it needed to tell its story in a compelling way to increase student recruitment and enrollment, strengthen its public image as an institution of higher learning, and gain visibility among a variety of audiences.

ANC conducted a community needs assessment and found limited awareness about the quality of education offered at the College. The community lacked confidence in the quality of education offered—surprising findings, since the College employs many local people. An internal audit validated the results, revealing that ANC’s public relations efforts needed coordination and focus. The College recognized that it should grow its people to their full potential and do a better job telling their story on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and beyond.



Teamwork helped Aaniiih Nakoda College fulfill their goals

Project Design

The College proposed to use the *Woksape Oyate* grant to create an office of institutional outreach and to hire a skilled professional to lead the efforts to communicate better about the opportunities offered at ANC. Next, it would build public confidence in its academic programs by supporting employees to advance their educational credentials. The College believed that this two-fold approach would ultimately improve academic programs and increase recruitment and retention.

The Fund awarded ANC a supplemental award in year three to provide additional scholarships for faculty and staff and to develop current and future leadership through a new mentoring program for faculty and administrators who had obtained degrees under the *Woksape Oyate* program.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College defined its intellectual capital in the beginning of the project as “who we are, what we know, and where we come from.” As the project progressed, ANC built on the collective knowledge and experiences of employees to attract new talent from the community and to foster campus-wide learning and leadership.

Targeted public relations efforts told the College’s story and substantially increased community awareness, positive perception of the College, and enrollment. ANC worked with professional marketing consultants and with everyone across campus to develop media stories that increased the College’s presence within the community. The new office of institutional outreach developed and distributed high-quality alumni posters, a newsletter, academic program brochures, and many articles in local and regional news media. A follow-up community survey conducted in 2009 showed that 90 percent of community members “would refer a friend or relative” to ANC. Enrollment at the College jumped by 40 percent over four semesters and set all-time high records, and enrollment in the White Clay Language Immersion Elementary School doubled. Scott Friskics, director of sponsored programs found personal testimonials as important as quantitative data. “By consistently focusing on the good things happening at the college and emphasizing the opportunities we can offer, we have reframed the way local residents – both on and off the reservation – perceive our institution.”



Six ANC staff obtained master’s degrees under the program

Advanced degrees for staff improved academic rigor, substantially increasing the institutional capacity and preparing new leaders for the future. The project succeeded in supporting 11 faculty and staff to complete advanced degrees. Faculty working on advanced degrees improved institutional practices and course rigor. They raised expectations for student writing and research, established a new Student Success Center, and improved advising practices. The director of the College’s White Clay Language Immersion School earned a doctorate in educational leadership, preparing her to lead strategic planning for the immersion

school’s future and positioning ANC for new funding resources. Degree-seeking employees increased scholarly research, publication, and presentations, bringing additional attention to academic excellence at the College.

ANC increased the project’s impact by developing formal mentoring and applied leadership experiences for several newly degreed faculty. Participants in the leadership program reported high levels of satisfaction and growing self-confidence as educational role models. The College retained all its project recipients and advanced several to higher levels of responsibility. One became the College’s new retention coordinator, two direct the Campus Corps project, and one became the chair of the institutional review board. The cumulative impact of individual employee accomplishments also positioned the College to begin planning a transition from an associate’s degree-granting institution to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

ANC's biggest challenge was hiring a qualified outreach coordinator. During the first half of the project, two coordinators were hired but did not remain at the College. The executive team overcame the challenge in filling the new position by pulling together and sharing responsibility for the grant's tasks. Once on board, the outreach coordinator engaged the entire campus community in sharing their successes and contributing to the institutional story. Teamwork was a significant and unanticipated positive result throughout the project.

Models and Sustainability

ANC found that its evaluation model proved a key ingredient in its project's success. They built their grant program around feedback from a community survey administered in 2005. The outcome data helped them to identify precisely the needs for improving their academic reputation and communicating successes. Circumstances required ANC to adjust their initial plan; they proved that they could be flexible in a way that was congruent with their values. The College built their capacity for institutional assessment by carefully tracking the impact of *Woksape Oyate* activities, utilizing outcome data to make needed adjustments. As they gathered success stories from focused discussions and individuals, ANC shared the lessons learned with the campus and community. All stakeholders felt valued, and this increased their investment in the project's success.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



James Flansburg and his daughter Bryar were featured in an ad campaign that highlights ANC alumni. Asked why he decided to attend ANC, James explained, "I was tired of people telling me that I needed a degree. You name it, I have probably done it. I was a boiler operator, janitor, coach, construction worker, and a bus driver." As a single father, James wanted to lead his three daughters by example. He said, "I wanted to show them that no matter what situation you are given, you can succeed." James graduated from ANC in 2003 with his associate's degree. He went on to Northern Montana College where he graduated with his bachelor's degree in computer information systems in 2006, then his master's degree. Today, he is the e-learning specialist at ANC. His daughter, Bryar, began attending ANC in fall 2007. She has made the President's List every semester and is the vice president of Beta Nu Alpha and a member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase public awareness of the College

- New Office of Institutional Outreach established
 - ◊ Public relations efforts integrated throughout the campus
 - ◊ 300 new professional marketing materials and media stories produced and distributed
- Community perceptions of the College improved by 40% over the life of the grant
- Student enrollment increased by 40% over four semesters

Goal 2: Increase the College's reputation for academic excellence and leadership

- Employee graduate degrees increased by 7%
- 15 employees funded for advanced degree work
 - ◊ 11 completed; 7 are tribal members
 - ◊ 2 bachelor's degrees
 - ◊ 7 master's degrees
 - ◊ 2 doctoral degrees
 - ◊ 4 degrees are in progress

Supplemental Goal: Develop staff for leadership and faculty roles

- Mentoring and leadership development model implemented
 - ◊ 7 members of the president's executive team provided leadership training to 8 junior staff and faculty members





**BAY MILLS COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



BAY MILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Brimley, Michigan

\$250,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Bay Mills Community College (BMCC or the College) serves the Bay Mills Indian Community and other tribal people in Michigan and throughout the Upper Peninsula region. The rural setting and rugged winter climate has been a barrier for recruiting and retaining staff with advanced credentials. In particular, BMCC had difficulty recruiting Native Americans for faculty positions. The majority of its employees were tribal members, but only 10 percent of full-time faculty and 38 percent of adjunct faculty were Native. When a key vice president unexpectedly passed away, the College saw the urgent need to develop qualified candidates from within to fill vacated roles. They needed to find a way to help tribal employees to prepare for teaching, and higher levels of leadership and responsibility.

Project Design

BMCC designed a project that prioritized professional development with an eye toward developing the credentials of tribal member employees. Their project would fulfill this goal by funding seven for bachelor's or master's degrees, or other advanced training in their disciplines. The College also took into consideration its need to improve institutional efficiency overall by upgrading critical knowledge and skills in every department. BMCC surveyed all positions to determine professional development needs and prioritized grant resources to improve their institutional ability to fulfill their mission and strengthen leadership among their tribal members.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College believes firmly that every employee should grow and develop to their highest potential. BMCC defined intellectual capital as the untapped potential of their

employees, and the College's ability to "grow its own." BMCC wanted to attract, nurture, and retain students, staff, and faculty from the local community who would develop as leaders. This became the heart of BMCC's sustained investment in growing its intellectual capital.

Modeling Lifelong Learning

“We feel that it is important to have a contingent of Native American instructors at a tribally controlled community college; not only will those instructors act as cultural guides and role models, but they will demonstrate what hard work and education can do for Native American people in this region. The BMCC Wisdom of the People project has provided us the resources to compete in the world of higher education, as we now have more highly qualified faculty, staff, and administrative personnel.”

- Kathy Adair, Project Lead

BMCC succeeded in developing its tribal employees and strengthened institutional processes for accountability. The project exceeded expectations by providing higher education awards to 14 tribal members, which was twice what BMCC proposed to fund. Six of these advanced to faculty positions or positions of greater authority and responsibility because of advanced credentials. BMCC also met their goal of providing professional development opportunities for key staff in every department, which translated into increased institutional capacity in technology, data access, and student services. These employees now possess the skills and technological capabilities to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing higher education environment.

Because of the project, the College developed new policies that strengthened accountability procedures that will help demonstrate return on investment from professional development activities. Nancy Berkompas, Office of Charter Schools said, “Training is more intentional from the beginning and more meaningful because they have to be accountable.” Professional development for all staff focused on assessment and increased appreciation of the role of data in decision-making. This helped the College develop an effective self-study for its successful 10-year reaccreditation. BMCC formed a Retention Committee, and a recruitment officer formalized research on attrition and student success. The College implemented software to track attendance, document tutor usage, and monitor success rates in developmental and core classes. The president created a new position, the director of data and reporting, whose role is to extract and utilize this new data. The Faculty Assessment Committee revised assessment processes to better determine learner outcomes and implemented standardized tests, for the first time, to measure student learning and the strengthen the general education program. System-wide technology and assessment trainings enabled BMCC to improve data access and meet accreditation standards. Individual training activities developed leadership and critical thinking skills, prepared online instructors, and improved technology-based communication, grants management, and student services such as financial aid. These improvements increased student retention.

Professional development increased academic excellence. BMCC faculty helped increase their credibility in higher education circles by attending professional conferences where they connected with academics at other institutions. The newly formed networks allowed BMCC faculty to identify and join projects with common interests. Attendance at scientific conferences led to collaborative research projects in alternative energy with students at Lake Superior State University and Michigan State University. Faculty professional development in their discipline improved their ability to offer cutting-edge academic content. The chairperson of the math department obtained a master’s degree and this allowed the College to offer higher-level math, including calculus and trigonometry. BMCC graduates were therefore better prepared to enter four-year degree programs. There are more highly educated tribal members at the College, increasing role models for the community and raising the overall education level within the Bay Mills Indian Community. Investing in faculty and staff guarantees future stability for the College because there is a constituency of tribal members ready to lead BMCC into its future.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

BMCC was surprised by the level of employee interest in pursuing higher degrees. As staff gained education and training in their areas of expertise, the College noticed an excitement growing among its employees. The president responded by providing three additional staff scholarships from general funds. Investments in staff and faculty education quickly snowballed into improvements for the College overall. For example, newly trained student services staff recognized a need for tutoring and organized efforts to open a learning center. BMCC’s president supported their plan and dedicated resources for a new center. In another instance, advanced training prepared a staff member to fill

a new position that would coordinate online courses, troubleshoot delivery problems, and provide technical support for students taking the courses. The technical support provided through this new position improved student engagement in online courses and resulted in fewer technical difficulties overall.

Models and Sustainability

The College made good use of training and professional development by strategic investment in the roles and institutional processes that would sustain institutional effectiveness. People trained under the grant are teaching others so that knowledge increases system-wide on critical processes such as institutional assessment, data management, and accreditation. The dean of student services initiated monthly division meetings to improve the exchange of information.

Faculty and staff attending professional development and leadership conferences noticed that women have greater opportunities for promotion at tribal colleges than in other college systems. This observation increased their pride and commitment to the tribal college movement. BMCC has a highly effective model for developing tribal member employees. The College has a practice of promoting people based on ability and desire, conditional upon their accomplishment of the advanced degree work necessary to qualify them for the next position. By “growing their own,” the project is self-sustaining to ensure future access to highly qualified faculty and leadership.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Duane Bedell is a Bay Mills Tribal member who will earn a combined bachelor's and master's degree in information systems from Baker College online. Duane is currently the department chair for BMCC's Computer Information Systems (CIS) program, and his advanced degree will not only allow the College to expand current information technology (IT) course offerings, but also to meet the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requirement of master's level credentialed instructors. In addition, the College is grooming Duane for the IT director position, which is part of the executive team. The current IT director is non-native, and when he retires, Duane will be equipped to assume the position.

Duane added four new IT classes because of his advanced education. During his two years at BMCC, he implemented a computer repair program whereby students work on computers for community members, employees, and students at no cost. This program is very popular with the community and students are learning valuable hands-on lessons while doing community service.

Duane says, “It has always been a dream of mine to continue my education after I earned an associate's degree in computer science. However, after several years, I started to realize my educational goals were becoming more distant due to finances. When I started work at BMCC, I learned that the *Woksape Oyate* program covered tuition for employees. When I discovered this program, I decided this was my opportunity to achieve my educational goals. The American Indian College Fund and Lilly Endowment have given me the incentive and motivation to continue my pursuit of obtaining a master's degree in information systems, and for that I am truly grateful.”

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Enhance organizational leadership capacity through higher education for at least 7 tribal member employees

- 14 tribal member employees funded for advanced degree study
 - ◊ 3 additional tribal member employees funded through the College's general fund
- 9 tribal member employees completed advanced degrees
 - ◊ 4 master of science degrees
 - ◊ 4 bachelor's degrees
 - ◊ 1 associate's degree
- 5 tribal member employee degrees in progress
 - ◊ 1 doctorate in education
 - ◊ 1 combination bachelor's/master's
 - ◊ 2 bachelor's degrees
 - ◊ 1 master's degree
- 6 tribal members promoted due to increased education and qualifications
- 1 tribal member employee earned a bachelor's of business administration, enrolled in a master's program, and now teaches business courses

Goal 2: Improve job performance for faculty and staff and meet HLC accreditation requirements through training and professional development

- 25 employees per grant year received training or attended professional conferences
- 22 employees attended the annual HLC conference during the grant years



Some of Bay Mills Community College's Woksape Oyate higher education recipients



Faculty and students engaged in biomass research project



BLACKFEET COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Browning, Montana

\$400,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Blackfeet Community College (BCC or the College) found that its community had lost some of its traditional wisdom and language. Western education induced a multi-generational silence about tribal knowledge in an educational setting. Tribal leaders recognized that education would promote self-sufficiency and restore community pride, and that BCC would be instrumental in developing educational programs to empower their people. The College had a number of associate's degree programs but wanted to develop baccalaureate and professional degree programs. It needed to take preliminary steps to prepare for future growth.

Many first-year students came unprepared for college-level work, and retention was a problem. Students had to improve their academic skills if they were to succeed. Many students commuted long distances and were unable to access existing support services. To do a better job of retaining students, BCC needed to address their unique learning needs. Faculty needed advanced credentials in order to improve course rigor and to prepare for developing baccalaureate programs. The entire campus needed to open a dialogue about Blackfeet traditional knowledge so that the college experience could become more relevant for students.

Project Design

BCC established an interdepartmental College Advisory Team (CAT) to guide its expansion to a four-year institution. The College proposed funding for 10 employees to complete advanced degrees. Recipients would infuse new instructional methods and updated content into academic programs.

BCC would promote a more culturally relevant learning experience by launching its Blackfeet/Pikuni Center of Excellence. The center proposed a series of experiential learning seminars and language immersion activities taught by traditional elders and other Blackfeet scholars and experts. The College would initiate learning exchanges with other universities to help elevate Blackfeet traditional wisdom as a valuable body of knowledge in higher education.

Restoration for Balanced Perspectives

“Increased tribal knowledge helped reduce internalized conflict within the community and at the College. The entire staff is confident in using knowledge from multiple cultures to solve intellectual challenges in higher and community education. The project started a momentum toward intellectual excellence.”

- Carol Murray, Director, Blackfeet/Pikuni Center for Excellence

BCC determined it would improve retention by providing additional academic support services and incentives for student attendance and improved grades in math and English. It would develop partnerships with local schools to standardize learning approaches and design more culturally relevant first-year success courses to help students engage in their early college experience.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College holds its intellectual capital in its academic integrity and reputation among mainstream institutions, and in its capacity to develop culturally relevant learning experiences for faculty and students. Its intellectual capital was, to some extent, hidden due to historical silencing of tribal wisdom.

The College reduced cultural oppression by creating a safe climate for tribal knowledge to emerge. The Blackfoot/Pikuni Center of Excellence played a vital role in illuminating Blackfoot intellectual capital. The center provided tools that made casual conversation in Blackfoot easy and fun, and enhanced visibility of Blackfoot symbols across campus. The project hired an intern to locate resources and facilitate culturally relevant learning approaches. The center helped the Curriculum Committee to redesign its first-year success course, and integrate readings and examples that were appropriate for a tribal college.

BCC created a successful model of cultural immersion for non-Native faculty, including cultural field trips before the school year and ongoing cultural seminars and informal language immersion experiences. The experiential seminars helped open a dialogue about topics that the community and College had avoided for years and helped the faculty feel more comfortable in incorporating cultural content in their classrooms. The College's experience showed that a welcoming environment for faculty and staff, and a non-threatening approach to learning local history, culture, and language increases employee morale, deepens culture-based course foundations, and improves faculty relationships with students. BCC will want to examine longitudinal institutional data to see if student success improved because of the more culturally responsive learning environment.



Carol Murray welcomes elders in classrooms

The College found that it had to cultivate a relationship with the community elders. BCC originally proposed that elders teach the language, but discovered that elders resisted speaking their language due to punitive experiences at boarding schools. Instead, the elders selected language interns to do the teaching, and then felt comfortable stepping into advisory roles. Elder engagement increased a little at a time and many eventually began participating in language and history events. The College recorded several elders telling stories at the language immersion camps and preserved

these as teaching tools for the future. The elders' participation increased the credibility of BCC as *the* tribal college of the Blackfoot Nation. Two hundred and fifty middle school students and their parents attended cultural seminars.

BCC created pathways for advanced faculty and staff degrees. The CAT selected a group of six committed and highly motivated staff and funded their tuition and expenses for master's degrees in educational leadership at Montana State University. The cohort traveled together and attended common courses. This created a strong support network that enabled five of the six to complete

their programs. Outcome measures showed that the cohort experience increased commitment to the college and improved job performance. BCC employees who complete master's degrees are qualified to teach courses that will transfer to the state universities and will help the College qualify for four-year status.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

BCC benefitted from a stable interdisciplinary team that practiced continuous project assessment. The team found that academic support services did not increase enrollment as predicted, and language immersion camps did not increase fluency. By identifying appropriate targets, the outcomes became more meaningful. For example, the project found that students needed access to evening student tutoring. Participating instructors saw the need for additional out-of-classroom support. The increased attention improved relationships between instructors and students and resulted in increased student attendance and assignment completion. The project raised institutional awareness and curiosity about effective student retention.

Models and Sustainability

The College collaborated with the University of Montana (UM) to create two accredited graduate courses held at the BCC campus. Staff enrolled in courses and gained graduate credits without the burden of travel to distant universities. The courses combined Western standards with Blackfeet knowledge and balanced the two worldviews. Professors from Villanova University, University of Lethbridge, Red Crow College, and UM taught the courses. The professors modeled to BCC faculty how to integrate cultural content into an academic experience. BCC's model paired professors with community elders as co-teachers and required them to provide seminars for the public. This gave access to Blackfeet knowledge for both tribal and non-tribal community members who did not attend the College.

The BCC campus provided a comfortable setting to discuss ideas in a way that may not have been possible in a mainstream setting. Visiting scholars guided difficult discussions about historic and contemporary issues, comparing Blackfeet experiences and insights with other cultures. Participants shared their challenges openly, which promoted greater understanding and respect across the campus and within the community. BCC demonstrated its competence for alternative course design, and furthered its academic reputation. UM was so impressed with the content and process that it requested to offer the courses in their graduate catalogue. This showed that mainstream institutions of higher learning could benefit from these courses designed by tribal colleges and universities.



Carol Murray, director of Blackfeet/Pikuni Center of Excellence

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Anne Racine serves as an academic counselor at BCC. She completed a master’s degree in learning and development. Anne reported, “The impact that getting a master’s degree has had on me is profound in every aspect of my life. Professionally, I have grown and become a confident, engaged, inspired, educated person. Personally, I never dreamed that I would be here at this stage in my life. I am a role model for my children who are in undergraduate programs, and they say how proud they are of me. In completing my master’s degree, I have a renewed sense of urgency to apply my knowledge with my peers. I am excited to engage in building the College’s image of academic excellence. I look forward to teaching, counseling, advising, administering, and, most of all, learning to make a positive impact on our students and BCC.”

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase faculty academic credentials

- 25 employees funded for advanced degree work
 - ◊ 6 degrees completed
 - ◊ 5 master’s degrees
 - ◊ 1 bachelor’s degree
 - ◊ 12 degrees in progress
 - ◊ 1 doctoral degree
 - ◊ 8 master’s degrees
 - ◊ 3 bachelor’s degrees
 - ◊ 7 employees discontinued programs of study
 - ◊ 6 left BCC employment
 - ◊ 1 employee withdrew

Project Goals and Results

Goal 2: Improve student retention and success in math and English

- New tutoring opportunities
 - ◊ Study nights offered, using peer tutors and incentives
 - ◊ Several faculty members extended office hours and offered extra help
- BCC founded new partnership with local K-12 schools to adopt common writing strategy
- BCC revised a “first-year experience” standard curriculum
 - ◊ Added cultural readings
 - ◊ Required of all first-year students
- Math and English scores increased by the end of year four

Goal 3: Increase cultural competence of faculty and staff

- 13 new cultural seminars increased faculty confidence in integrating cultural content and resources
- Faculty reported that cultural orientation helped them work better with Native students

Goal 4: Promote language fluency and use across campus

- BCC developed 10 new conversational language booklets used in summer immersion camps and campus training experiences
 - ◊ 6 digital recordings captured elders speaking the language
- *Pikanii* use increased among both Native and non-Native faculty and students



CANKDESKA CIKANA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Leadership Development for the College and the Nation

“The project has provided future leaders with an understanding of their cultural background. This knowledge is becoming the catalyst for learning the Dakota language. These future leaders have also learned how our tribal administration and our government functions. Students are challenged to learn both traditional and contemporary perspectives and to relay verbally and in writing how this affects their lives.”

- Phillip Longie, Project Lead

CANKDESKA CIKANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Fort Totten, North Dakota

\$400,000

Academic Programs, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC, or the College) reviewed community survey data from the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation and found that the community identified Dakota language preservation as a critical focus for the College. CCCC recognized the Dakota Studies and Tribal Administration programs as the two most important academic areas for development to meet the community’s needs. The College offered these courses on a limited basis in the past; however, enrollment and interest had dwindled. The Tribal Administration program never had produced a graduate, and only one student had received a degree in Dakota Studies. The language courses had not been effective for producing fluent Dakota speakers.

Project Design

The Fund offered additional points for project designs that promoted collaboration among TCUs. CCCC was the only college that proposed to work with others to accomplish project outcomes. The College wanted help to redesign and expand the Dakota Studies and Tribal Administration programs. CCCC would take the lead in a new alliance among Dakota-serving tribal colleges to develop an effective language curriculum, expand the Dakota Studies curriculum, and share innovative practices. The College wanted to create a tier-based academic program to prepare graduates for tribal leadership and future teaching roles at CCCC. The College would update its current certificate and associate’s degree programs, and develop a new bachelor’s program in Tribal

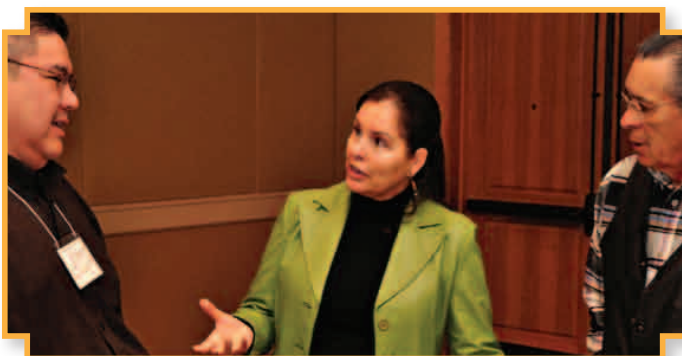
Administration. To increase enrollment in these programs, CCCC would establish a Dakota honors program with intensive academic mentoring.

Intellectual Capital Gained

CCCC understands that intellectual capital resides in the cultural wisdom of each Dakota person as well as his or her academic credentials. A hallmark of the College’s intellectual capital is its integration of Dakota and Western perspectives as equal pillars in academia.

The College led a collaboration of tribal colleges and became a true Center of Excellence in Indigenous language preservation and revitalization. CCCC recognized it needed to develop a different approach to language education that would produce speakers. The Maori people of New Zealand implemented a standardized curriculum several years ago to address the rapidly diminishing use of its Indigenous *Te Reo Maori* language. CCCC obtained the curriculum and got permission to translate it into the Dakota language, adopting the methodology that has shown success in helping to restore the Maori language.

CCCC took the lead in forming a collaborative venture for language preservation among Dakota-speaking tribal colleges and communities. The Dakota Alliance formed between CCCC, Nebraska Indian Community College, Sisseton Wahpeton College, Fort Peck Community College, University of North Dakota, and two Dakota communities in Manitoba, Canada. Under the guidance of tribal elders, CCCC published and implemented the *Dakota Iapi Canku* curriculum, which shows early and strong promise for producing fluent speakers. This outcome is highly significant for the fields



Dr. Russ McDonald, vice-president of academics, President Cynthia Lindquist, and Mr. Phillip Longie, project director, led the Dakota Alliance

of linguistics and Indigenous language preservation. The College will sustain its project as it builds relationships with local schools and mainstream universities in order to disseminate the new pedagogy and the results of its research. CCCC attributes its increased enrollment and graduation over the grant cycle to its stronger language programs. Between 2007 and 2011, CCCC saw enrollment in language courses increase by 217 percent, overall enrollment at the College increase by 80 percent, and graduation increase by 37 percent.

The College updated and expanded its Dakota Studies degree program and met the community's expectation for tribal leadership development. At the beginning of the grant, there were no students enrolled in the Dakota Studies and tribal administration programs. Grant activities helped the College revitalize interest in and increase graduation in these programs. The work of the Alliance supported the program revision and curriculum development, improved teaching methods, and engaged students and community through language learning activities. CCCC's entire faculty engaged in a literature review and recommended new holdings for the library. There are now more than 3,000 resources for teaching about Dakota history, culture, and language available to the campus and community. The College developed six new Dakota Studies courses including three new language courses. The academic dean and Dakota Studies faculty personally identified and nurtured students who showed leadership ability, and recruited them to the major. Students received stipends for their cultural research, along with intense mentoring, academic support, and advisement about advanced degree work. Between 2010 and 2012, 15 Dakota Studies majors graduated with associate's degrees. These graduates emerged with a stronger sense of Dakota identity and have committed to continue serving their people. The College expects long-term return on investment from these students who will complete advanced degrees and return to fill tribal leadership roles and teach at CCCC.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

CCCC did not implement a bachelor's degree in tribal administration. The College found that they were not yet prepared to develop a four-year degree program. Ultimately, CCCC needed a partner that was willing to provide a hybrid program on the College's campus. Staff explored partnerships with other universities to create the baccalaureate program. Several potential partners lacked the essential knowledge of tribal systems. CCCC learned that although it was not yet ready to implement the four-year program, it had the expertise within its own institution concerning tribal policy and management. Mayville State University became this new partner and is now offering business courses online through an interactive video network on campus. Four CCCC graduates are now working on their bachelor's degree in business.

Models and Sustainability

CCCC had the only *Woksape Oyate* project that undertook a true partnership among tribal colleges to share knowledge and best practices. The College accomplished this in part by engaging a group of eight elder consultants from several Dakota-speaking communities and sustaining their role across five years. These individuals had previously avoided contact with their tribal colleges because of past boarding school trauma. Project staff built trust by showing respect through time-honored cultural protocols. In Dakota culture, it is traditional to feed those that offer help. CCCC literally "brought the elders to the table" at their community *Wahanpi Anpetu*, or "Soup Days." Elders became the teachers at these events, which required participants to speak only in Dakota. These events provided informal opportunities for all participants to be equally vulnerable and to learn together.



Dakota elders provided stability and curriculum content

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Jade Frier is a 29-year-old single mother of three children and an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Tribe. Jade graduated in 2011 with an associate's degree in natural resource management and Indian Studies. Jade tells her story: "Being a young woman with children, I knew that getting my education was valuable not only for me, but for my children. I have always had a passion for the environment and learning about my culture. As an intern for the natural resource management program, I worked in the college greenhouse and gardens on campus. I also participated in tilling of community members gardens. After graduation, a job opened up at the College for a community agriculture coordinator. I applied, and they hired me for the position! I have managed to incorporate my Dakota Studies knowledge with my new job. We try to use traditional methods with our gardening. We also identify our native plants by their scientific name and Dakota names.

We research how our ancestors used them. I am teaching my children everything I have learned, including the language. It truly opened my eyes to a new way of seeing the environment and our culture. I see how important it is to preserve it for our children and grandchildren."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Develop and implement an effective Dakota language program

- 9 Dakota Alliance forums held from 2007 to 2012
- CCCC published the language curriculum in two Dakota dialects
 - ◇ 3 new language courses developed with evaluation tools
 - ◇ 6 digital recordings of fluent elders produced
 - ◇ 102 monthly community language programs or *Wahanpi Anpetu* (Soup Days)

Goal 2: Update and expand Dakota Studies and Tribal Administration degree programs

- 2 degree programs reviewed and revised
- Dakota Alliance generated new and updated course content
 - ◇ 6 courses revised
 - ◇ 6 new Dakota Studies courses approved and offered
 - ◇ 473 new Dakota cultural and historical holdings added
- Online baccalaureate degree program available to graduate

Goal 3: Increase enrollment in the Dakota Studies and Tribal Administration program

- 15 students enrolled in Dakota Studies and Tribal Administration majors
 - ◇ 5 completed associate's degrees in Tribal Administration
 - ◇ 5 completed associate's degrees in Dakota Studies
- 4 graduates enrolled in baccalaureate programs



CHIEF DULL KNIFE
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



CHIEF DULL KNIFE COLLEGE

Lame Deer, Montana

\$400,000; Supplemental \$100,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development

Identified Need

All academic programs at Chief Dull Knife College (CDKC or the College) work to revitalize the Cheyenne language, historical knowledge, and identity devastated by federal policies and public education. The underlying goal is the renewal of a living Cheyenne *hósêstoo’o*, translated loosely as *story*.

Montana passed the “Indian Education for All” statute in 1999 that required public schools to teach about Montana tribes and appointed tribal colleges to lead curriculum development. CDKC identified appropriate source materials about the Northern Cheyenne but needed additional resources to acquire the materials. The Montana law also provided for certification of tribal language instructors who could teach in public schools without a college degree. CDKC needed to strengthen their language education programs and train more teachers to fill the openings created by the new legislation.

Project Design

The *Woksape Oyate* grant proposed to strengthen the College’s ability to revitalize the language and tell the Cheyenne wisdom story. The project proposed to establish and grow a centralized, national repository of Cheyenne historical and cultural materials that would be accessible to the College, community, public school educators, and other interested scholars. CDKC would hire a historian and cultural expert to organize acquisitions, create a digital database, and provide technical assistance to those using the collection. The historian would engage the tribe and community in learning more about their history and language, making the College a more visible resource. CDKC also proposed to expand its Cheyenne language education offerings, and increase capacity

Telling the True Story

“Chief Dull Knife College is making continuous progress in language education for the Northern Cheyenne Nation, and the college’s reputation as the repository of resources for education is growing beyond the local reservation. The college prepared teachers for state-required certification in Cheyenne language and existing certified teachers received training and resources to teach appropriate content about the Cheyenne people, ensuring that the next generation of American Indian students will hear their story represented accurately in public schools.”

- Richard Littlebear, President

to certify language teachers by adding an additional language instructor, and creating immersion activities where new teachers could practice their new skills.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College defined intellectual capital as the collective ability of its staff to promote and sustain Cheyenne history and language and to act as stewards of the *hósêstoo’o*. According to the project evaluator, “The project enhanced intellectual capital by facilitating greater access to the cultural knowledge essential to intellectual exchange and further development of Northern Cheyenne language and culture.”

The Cheyenne Culture Center acquired important cultural and historical resources for the Nation and built a repository with a growing reputation. The project hired full-time historian Mina Seminole, and supported her development as a professional archivist. She developed policies and procedures, and used professional bibliographic management software to create a digital sourcebook of resources for all departments. Materials from the archives framed professional development experiences for local certified teachers, and

historical presentations for tribal and community groups and schools. In gratitude, the tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and one school allowed her to include their resources in the sourcebook. Community members offered family histories, and these became critically important in expanding the *hósêstoo’o*. CDKC now houses the largest known collection of historical and contemporary resources on the Cheyenne and it will continue to grow.



President Richard Littlebear, Mina Seminole, and language instructor Verda King

The center’s reputation drew scholars from other institutions and from abroad, and many offered new materials. For example, Utah Valley State University donated substantial holdings, including Cheyenne census records translated by their students. A California professor donated research on U.S. Cavalry Indian scouts, and a Swedish visitor offered photographs of an important Cheyenne battle site. Ms. Seminole’s new relationships with five private museums yielded significant acquisitions.

A full-time Cheyenne language instructor bolstered interest in language revitalization among Cheyenne elders, community members, students, and staff. The immediate impact of the project was the expansion of CDKC’s language education offerings from Level I to Level IV. Enrollment in language courses increased, and these students had higher retention, attendance, and overall performance than students not taking language courses. Class activities required students to interview elders and capture their stories for the Cultural Center archives, which strengthened students’ cultural identity and self-concept as learners and leaders. Many language students successfully continued on to the certified language teacher program.

Dr. Richard Littlebear, CDKC president, also reported that the project affected the institutional culture. The focus on the language created a more collaborative and open learning environment for everyone, and strengthened capacity to fulfill the College’s mission.

A supplemental grant increased the number of Cheyenne language teachers certified to teach at elementary, secondary, and college levels. CDKC was one of six TCUs awarded a *Woksape Oyate* supplemental grant. The funding provided for another language teacher to accelerate

the College's teacher training program. Participants collaborated with elders who were fluent speakers and applied the language instruction pedagogy in immersion camps. There are 27 additional Cheyenne tribal members prepared for employment in local school districts. This programming will play a critical role in rebuilding and revitalizing a living Cheyenne way of life.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The project team was surprised at the enormous interest in the Cheyenne language, and its challenge was to develop programs to meet the need. Nearly 800 community members from ages 6 to 80 completed the College's first language use survey. "Save the Cheyenne Language Day" drew more than 200 people, and 400 public school students attended two Cheyenne Language Bowls. The project hosted four language immersion and day camps, and 300 youth participated. CDKC offered courses at tribal offices, detention centers, a nursing home, and one remote high school via distance education. Fifteen tribal employees completed Cheyenne I outside of regular work time. Notably, the project team succeeded in producing community events that integrated divergent interests.

The unexpected demand led the College to develop more language courses than it proposed. A new course in Cheyenne writing blossomed into four writing workshops. The Native Studies department developed an oral traditions course because of student interest in capturing elder stories. Increased enrollment in language courses showed the need for a permanently funded full-time language instructor. With board approval, the College hired Burt Medicine Bull, Jr., a tribal member and primary speaker with a master's degree in educational leadership. Overall, increased language offerings improved community opinion of the College, and tribal members became champions for language preservation. When a local school district planned to cut elementary language instructors to trim budgets, parents successfully advocated for retention of certified language instructors.

Models and Sustainability

The College created a dual-pronged approach, based on the recognition that language education alone is not enough to revitalize an Indigenous tongue and restore cultural pride. Instead, the project combined access to the true history and culture *along with* effective language instruction.

The project exceeded expectations in its capacity to acquire and archive new materials and make these accessible. The Culture Center supported the simultaneous development of the language program, and increased enrollment in the College. The language project's success helped the College earn a new grant for language instruction in their campus pre-school.

The project accelerated language revitalization efforts. CDKC elevated its academic reputation and its vision for language and culture preservation. The project historian recently accepted a request from the Public Broadcasting System to help develop historically accurate content for a new multi media teaching tool. *Mission US* creates online video games set in different eras. "Mission 3" covers the life of a Cheyenne boy as he navigates the changes for Plains Indians after the American Civil War. Becoming the premier repository for Cheyenne historical and cultural resources will continue to open new opportunities for CDKC to increase its visibility and acclaim.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



As community awareness of the College and its resources grew, project staff received more requests for language translation and for culture and history presentations in schools and at various community agencies.

The personnel at the Crow Agency Indian Health Service in Crow Agency, Montana, contacted the College for translation assistance with a Cheyenne elder. The hospital personnel were unable to communicate with the elderly patient who spoke only

Cheyenne and did not understand English. CDKC's language instructor, Verda King, attended a team conference at the hospital and translated for this man. She successfully communicated his health concerns to the medical team, and the man received appropriate medical care. The team also reviewed and revised the patient's medical chart, correcting information about other medical conditions that they had previously misunderstood.

Having a Cheyenne translator not only enabled this patient to communicate his medical conditions to the hospital staff, the hospital staff also were able to assure him that they understood his concerns and were taking his best interests into consideration. The availability of a translator helped protect the dignity, health, and well-being of the Cheyenne elder. This story illustrates this project's value in developing more Cheyenne language speakers who can ensure quality of life for community members needing assistance.



Cheyenne youth practice the "Total Physical Response" approach to language immersion, instructed by language certification program participants



Visitors from around the world and from local schools come to do research at CDKC

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Provide greater access to Northern Cheyenne history and culture through relevant resource materials and tribal partnerships

- 3,370 items catalogued in digital sourcebook
- 11,000 photographs archived
- 50 students, teachers, and tribal government staff participated in archive trainings
- 291 visitors to the Cheyenne Culture Center, including local groups, college instructors and students, community members, and international scholars
- 17 culture and history presentations made to schools and community

Goal 2: Increase and promote the preservation of Cheyenne language skills throughout the Northern Cheyenne Nation

- 5 new courses developed
 - ◊ CDKC added Cheyenne II, III, and IV, Cheyenne writing, and oral traditions
- Enrollment in Cheyenne language courses increased
 - ◊ 56% increase in Cheyenne I from Fall 2008 to Spring 2011
 - ◊ 20% increase in Cheyenne II from Spring 2009 to Spring 2011

Supplemental Goal: Increase number of Cheyenne teachers at every level of education

- 27 instructors certified at Class 7 level
- CDKC board approved funding for a permanent language instructor position



COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



New Program Development Inspired Institutional Efficiency

“The academic program staff was surprised at the impact the project had on the College as a whole. The project served as a catalyst for institutional change and inspired academic excellence across all programs. Intellectual capital development caught on as the central theme for the entire campus.”

- Dr. Diana Morris, Project Lead

COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION

Keshena, Wisconsin

\$700,000; Supplemental \$50,000

Academic Programs; Professional Development

Identified Need

In the region served by the College of Menominee Nation (CMN or the College), governments are major employers, and the Menominee Nation itself is situated within an unusually complex configuration of state, county, and regional governments, agencies, and business regulations. The College saw a need to develop Business and Public Administration degrees that would prepare the regional workforce with the knowledge and skills necessary to traverse these many complex systems. CMN’s approach would also provide a perspective lacking in degree programs at other regional institutions. CMN found that it had a strong pool of candidates from its existing associate’s degree graduates in liberal studies and business who wanted to advance to a bachelor’s degree.

Project Design

The College proposed to use the *Woksape Oyate* grant to develop new degree programs. CMN would review and update its associate’s degree in Business. This would prepare them to design, market, and implement new associate’s and bachelor’s degrees in Public Administration, with special emphasis on serving rural communities. CMN would convene an advisory board comprised of local business, tribal, and other government leaders and faculty who would guide curriculum development. The grant funds would provide the initial salaries for two new faculty members to help build the

curriculum and teach new classes. They would title the public administration program, “Preparing Community Leaders for the Future.”

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College defines intellectual capital as the growth of a body of knowledge and the investment of that knowledge in the betterment of CMN and the communities it serves. The *Woksape Oyate* project provided for the development of two baccalaureate degrees that specifically considered tribes, tribal entities, and tribal business in their development. No other degree programs in the area have this content; therefore, the new programs provide higher education that students cannot attain anywhere else in the region.



CMN president Verna Fowler and Dr. Diana Morris, academic dean at the *Woksape Oyate* evaluation training

The College developed its infrastructure to develop three new degree programs. CMN proposed two, but created three new degree programs. Just prior to the *Woksape Oyate* grant, the College had completed a new bachelor's degree in education. CMN faculty learned that tremendous effort and cooperation was required to implement new degree programs. The College proposed under *Woksape Oyate* to produce one associate's degree program and one baccalaureate program in Public Administration, which it succeeded in doing. CMN found its plan to develop the first degree in Public Administration could easily expand to a second bachelor's degree in Business Administration because many of the courses

it developed could apply for either major. Graduates of the associate programs would be prepared to enter either bachelor's degree program.

To accomplish this feat, CMN created a strong infrastructure including the new community advisory board. This group recommended essential learning and reviewed new course plans prior to their submission to the Curriculum Committee. CMN created two new positions to teach in the new degree programs and filled them with faculty that brought substantial real-world experience in economics and business, and local tribal affairs. Both held master's degrees and had enrolled in doctoral programs. The College promoted one of the new faculty members to chair the business and public administration departments. These two faculty members significantly raised the human capital at CMN, and provided leadership in streamlining the course development and approval process. Because it developed so many courses at once, the College created a more efficient procedure that went from a nine-month to a three-month process.

Course rigor improved across the academic program. As cross-departmental implications of the new degrees unfolded, the faculty examined academic rigor across the curriculum. The project team reviewed the existing associate's program in Business and found that the general studies curriculum needed revision to provide greater rigor in prerequisite courses. Subsequently, other disciplines reviewed and upgraded their degree programs so that they could incorporate public administration courses in their programs.

Developing baccalaureate programs also required the College to consider the transferability of credits to advanced degree work, and the College developed new links with the University of Wisconsin to facilitate transition of graduates to master's programs. Graduates of CMN's new baccalaureate programs can be confident that they are well prepared for employment in the public, private, or tribal sectors. They will have the academic competence to continue to graduate education if they choose to do so. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approved the new baccalaureate programs for accreditation in May 2012. Now that the College has three accredited programs, it can apply to the HLC for a change of institutional status – a baccalaureate degree-granting institution.

A supplemental grant opened the door for new online learning programs at the College. As the grant unfolded, the College saw how it could expand course delivery to improve access to new degrees. The Fund awarded CMN a supplemental grant to develop an online and hybrid course delivery and to provide professional development to the faculty. CMN acquired course delivery software and subsequently funded one faculty member for a master's certificate in online education. This individual taught the entire faculty how to use the new technology to deliver instruction

online. This significantly expanded CMN's outreach capacity and service area, increased interest in degree programs, and created new potential for TCU collaborations and articulation agreements for online courses.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

CMN's new knowledge and capacity for technology-based offerings significantly increases its capacity to reach local and distant students. The project inspired interest in providing online access to courses in a number of disciplines. The College expects the new degree program and online courses to be self-sustaining through increased enrollment and associated revenue. The general fund of the College incrementally absorbed the salaries of faculty hired through *Woksape Oyate* funding. Likewise, the course management system purchased through the supplemental award will transfer to the general fund budget along with ongoing faculty training and support.

However, increasing interest in online courses created a new challenge that the College has yet to address: non-Native students seeking access to CMN's programs through online options may threaten the College's 51 percent Native enrollment required to retain tribal college status.

Models and Sustainability

The project established a new model for integrating input from the public sector in designing new programs and ensuring curricular relevance. The College instituted a community advisory board to inform content and design of programs. The advisory board included leaders in public and private business, local and national government sectors, and a cross-disciplinary group of faculty. Regular contact with constituents stimulated new thinking among faculty and staff about the complex intergovernmental and business terrain encountered near Menominee Nation. The College responded to questions by creating new professional development opportunities for departments beyond the Business and Public Administration programs. For example, the Letters and Science department faculty received training on tribal law, sovereignty, and tribal government. These trainings will become an ongoing component of professional development. The advisory board will continue after the grant ends to develop internship opportunities for students, which will ensure students have up-to-date knowledge and skills to transfer successfully into the local public and private sectors upon graduation.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



CMN's first graduate with an associate's degree in Public Administration, Amber Chevalier, tells her story: "I am an enrolled member of the Menominee Indian Tribe. I have had the unique opportunity to finish most of my education on the reservation where I reside. I attended CMN for two years to complete my degree and then I transferred to the University of Wisconsin Green Bay to pursue a baccalaureate degree. I now serve as the associate administrator of Letters and Science department at CMN.

One of the best decisions I made was to attend CMN. Doing so has helped me to grow as a student and made me a better person for my community; I now see myself as a role model for my daughters. Not only have I gained academic skills, but I have also developed employment skills. I gained confidence in my abilities to think and plan critically, and I have realized the importance of taking advantage of opportunities and setting goals. This institution taught me how to learn from a multi-cultural perspective and gave me the skills and expertise I need to thrive in my profession. I now know exactly what I want in life and gained the knowledge I need to pursue it."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Implement new Public Administration associate's and baccalaureate degree programs

- Associate's degree in public administration developed and implemented
 - ◇ 4 new associate's courses developed and implemented
 - ◇ 10 associate's degree graduates by Spring 2012
- Bachelor's degree in public administration accredited in Spring 2012
 - ◇ 17 baccalaureate courses developed and approved
 - ◇ New marketing initiative for the 2012-13 academic year

Goal 2: Implement a new Business Administration baccalaureate degree

- Bachelor's degree in business administration accredited in Spring 2012
 - ◇ 19 new courses developed and approved
 - ◇ 50 students completed the associate's degree and are poised to enroll in the baccalaureate degree

Supplemental Goal: Increase the College's capacity to provide online programs

- 1 faculty member completed master's certificate completed in e-learning/distance education
 - ◇ Trained all full-time faculty on the Web Study system for delivery of hybrid/online courses
- 1 baccalaureate course offered online beginning Fall 2011
- 4 lower division courses redesigned for hybrid/online delivery





DINÉ COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Preserving Traditional Knowledge for Future Generations

“ We have our secret, sacred, real life stories and our historical journeys. Let’s preserve these resources for our young generations to value and cherish. That will really make sense years from now. This is a good investment. Let’s do it for our great people of the past and future generations. ”

- Avery Denny, Traditional Navajo Healer and Diné Studies Instructor

DINÉ COLLEGE

Tsaile, Arizona

\$260,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development

Identified Need

Diné College (the College), founded in 1968 to serve the vast Navajo Nation, has the distinction of being the first tribally controlled college in the United States. Throughout its history, it has accumulated a wealth of traditional knowledge and artifacts in its extensive collection of primary-source documents, recordings, research, and sacred objects.

Refining and publishing the holdings into usable form had long been a goal. The College needed foundation materials for the newly accredited four-year Diné Teacher Education program. Many of its resources were in the Navajo language, making them inaccessible to staff, students, and community members who did not speak or read the language. Traditional healers held most of the wisdom, referred to as *Diné Universe*, and passed this sacred body of knowledge down through generations by oral tradition. The College realized that much of its traditional knowledge would pass away with the elders. Its president desperately wanted to find ways to preserve this rich content, integrate it appropriately into course curricula, and share it with future generations. It hoped to use such materials to expand its Diné Studies associate’s degree into a bachelor’s program.

Project Design

The College proposed to use *Woksape Oyate* funds to provide honoraria to five elder wisdom-keepers to document specific elements of traditional knowledge that each uniquely held. Areas for study included history of the College, traditional ethnobotany, Navajo religion, Navajo culture and philosophy,

and leadership. The project would also fund an editor to translate original materials from Navajo into English and interpret, analyze, and bring into usable forms existing materials in the archives. The College would publish five textbooks, along with monographs, and curricular resources, and develop multimedia teaching tools to support instruction. The leadership materials would also form the basis of a new curriculum for a summer leadership institute that the College planned to offer the community and use in staff professional development and orientation.



The College installed a statue commemorating the “Corn Stalk Philosophy”

Intellectual Capital Gained

Diné College defines its intellectual capital as the resources which sustain the community in any economic and psychological setting in a given time, and which have the capacity to self-replenish for generations to come.

The project succeeded in capturing and making available the knowledge of living wisdom keepers. The College translated and prepared for publication significant cultural knowledge, history, and oral traditions from its archives. These materials strengthened its capacity to fulfill its mission as a tribal college. Diné College had accumulated course materials in rough draft form over the long and distinguished career of a senior scholar. From these, two texts are revised and ready for external academic review prior to publication. Once published, ethnic and Indigenous Studies scholars at other mainstream and tribal colleges can do further research based on the materials and integrate traditional Diné concepts into their courses.

The materials supported by *Woksape Oyate* funding will preserve for future generations the historic journey of Diné College to become the first tribal institution of higher learning. A published monograph documented research and analysis of the Diné philosophy of education, the impact of the return of local control to the Diné people, and the history of the College. The research uncovered and revitalized an educational philosophy penned in the 1960s that encompasses the balance and qualities of the cornstalk. The knowledge will connect contemporary students with the original vision of its founders. The men who started the College left instructions for future leaders, along with ceremonies and songs to help guide the College with spiritual principles. An instructor in Diné Studies, who is also a traditional medicine man, interpreted the leadership instructions, created curriculum, instructional resources, and made video recordings of the songs.

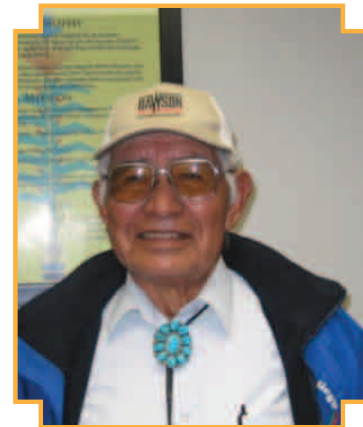
The College has already disseminated the leadership lessons through a new upper division Diné education philosophy course. The course is now required professional development for all employees. According to course evaluations, the experience increased the use of cultural concepts in coursework and improved employee morale. Community members also attended the Diné education philosophy sessions. The course formed a culturally appropriate foundation for Diné higher learning and increased the community’s access to its own history. As the College continues to develop the archived materials, it will create more programs that reflect the Diné worldview and provide a balance of Western educational content.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The project accomplished its original intent but did not produce as many products as it planned because a number of challenges. An initial controversy involved the selection and contracting process for the project scholars, and an apparent lack of diversity in the scholarly perspectives. The board of regents heard public and faculty concerns, and requested an independent audit of the project. The auditor general of the Navajo Nation found that the president had not followed approved grant management and procurement policies, and made recommendations about steps the College should take to prevent similar problems in the future. The board subsequently removed the president, and requested a corrective action plan for the project. The project lead, a respected elder, decided to retire.

The elder scholars were discouraged by the process. Their works represented knowledge acquired over a lifetime. They were unsure of their role and responsibilities to the new administration and questioned whether they should submit their finished work. An interim president and then the newly appointed president worked with the team of elders to create an amended plan to salvage the completed work and reduce the expected outputs. As the former department chair of Diné Studies, the new president knew the materials were important. She took leadership of the project and worked diligently to restore the relationship with the elder scholars. The president took steps to guarantee inclusion with faculty and community, and established peer reviews to ensure that materials would meet academic standards. She moved the project forward and met the overall intent of the grant to preserve traditional wisdom and make it accessible and appropriate for instructional use.

The *Diné Universe* is in danger of being lost. Sadly, during the *Woksape Oyate* project period, one of the elder scholars passed away. Mr. Mike Mitchell documented his extensive knowledge of plants and traditional Diné plant medicine as a part of the project. The Navajo Nation and the state of Arizona recognized him as an expert in cultural curriculum. Despite no formal education, Mr. Mitchell taught Navajo history and culture at Diné College from its inception in 1969 until 1989. Mr. Mitchell's research was near completion when he passed away in March 2010. The loss of this invaluable source of traditional knowledge underscores the urgency of documenting information that can be lost when knowledge keepers pass away. It also evoked a new dilemma regarding intellectual property of traditional knowledge, which the College has yet to resolve.



Mr. Mike Mitchell, traditional ethnobotany expert

Models and Sustainability

Diné College understood the importance of preserving and developing the wisdom of the people for the benefit of future generations, and its intentions were honorable. Through the challenges and lessons learned, the College positioned itself to lead the way for other tribal institutions of higher education to work effectively with sensitive cultural and community issues. There are vast amounts of intellectual capital that reside in every Indigenous Nation, and the challenge is how tribal scholars and institutions can best access and integrate into curricula the resources that remain untapped. In particular, most Native people consider their cultural and traditional knowledge as sacred and believe that no one should publish or disseminate it in written form. Diné College is fortunate that among its faculty are traditional spiritual people who can guide the interpretation and decision-making about how and in what context to discuss, publish, and share cultural knowledge. The lessons learned should further the dialogue at all tribal colleges about incorporating cultural knowledge in the curriculum.

The *Woksape Oyate* project proposed to uncover innate wisdom and promote leadership. Interestingly, the project demonstrated the importance of leaders involving diverse points of view when capturing the wisdom of an entire people and its history. The College learned that transparency is critical and used this opportunity to improve their institutional processes. In the end, because of the controversy weathered during the grant term, the materials produced will be more acceptable to diverse stakeholders and more accessible for classroom use.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Avery Denny is an instructor and cultural liaison with the Diné Policy Institute and the embodiment of Navajo culture. He has worked at the College for 15 years. Avery is a traditional Navajo practitioner with a traditional *tseyeel* or tightly wrapped hair bun. Students and staff often observe him singing a traditional Navajo song as he walks the Diné College campus to deliver a lecture or maybe conduct a Navajo shoe game during the winter months. Avery has spent his life “walking the walk and talking the talk.” His interpretation of an important life way was set down in writing in the document

he created for the Wisdom of the People project. Avery is dedicated to retaining his Navajo culture and language. He lives to persuade Navajo young people to do likewise. By being true to his Navajo identity and the teachings of Navajo elders, Avery believes this knowledge will build a healthy life and contribute to positive self-esteem in an individual, no matter whom the person is or where that person comes from. He uses his knowledge to teach young people leadership and real-life living skills. He works hard to maintain the oral history and stories of his predecessors.

Avery is a *Hatathli* or Navajo singer. He is a singer of the Blessing Way, Beauty Way, Night Way, and Enemy Way. These Navajo healing ceremonies consist of two, five, and nine night ceremonies, which are known as *Hataal Nahagha*. It takes many years and a great deal of discipline to learn these ceremonies and there are very few medicine men remaining who can conduct them.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Research, write, and publish textbooks and materials on Diné language, culture, and history using archival materials and wisdom of elders

- *History of Diné College*
 - ◇ 1 monograph published
- *Foundations of Navajo Culture* and *Foundations of Navajo Philosophy*
 - ◇ 2 manuscripts revised, prepared for peer review
 - ◇ 8 courses incorporated the revised materials
- 5 traditional instructional modules prepared
 - ◇ Creation, Mythology, and History
 - ◇ Climate Change
 - ◇ Water Issues
 - ◇ Traditional Food
 - ◇ Traditional Medicine
- *Azéé be Nahagha* (Navajo religion) research presented at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit
 - ◇ The manuscript is in progress
 - ◇ The scholar has not decided to release the intellectual property rights

Goal 2: Develop a leadership program that supports faculty recruitment and retention

- Leadership materials translated and incorporated into course offerings
 - ◇ Diné education philosophy course implemented
 - ◇ 195 students enrolled in 2010-2011
 - ◇ 90 employees attended in 2010-2011
 - ◇ Sessions videotaped for future use
 - ◇ Leadership ceremonial songs recorded
 - ◇ 2 Navajo holistic healing courses
 - ◇ 60 student enrolled, representing an increased enrollment

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FOND DU LAC TRIBAL
AND COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Culturally Appropriate Early Intervention

“ Students that fall through the cracks in the period from contact to arrival on campus deserve the opportunities that attending FDLTCC can offer. When the College initiates early connections, it helps prepare for the transition to college from high school or the reservation, which can translate into a successful student, one who feels connected to FDLTCC. ”

- Dr. Robert Peacock,
Tribal College Director

FOND DU LAC TRIBAL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Cloquet, Minnesota

\$150,000

Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDLTCC or the College) had issues with accreditation, and temporarily lost their tribal college status due to insufficient enrollment of Native students. During the initial two years of the *Woksape Oyate* project, the College was ineligible to receive support from the Fund. FDLTCC became eligible to apply for funding in 2010. The College had reviewed its persistence and suspension data in 2007 and identified recruitment and retention as a major goal for the college. It had initiated a campaign to design and implement retention strategies, including an early alert process for students with poor attendance or test scores. However, the strategies had not been fully successful. To retain tribal students, FDLTCC needed to focus some of its retention strategies specifically for Native students and restore the perception in the public and in the tribal college movement that it served tribal students appropriately.



Project Design

The College would use *Woksape Oyate* funding to build on their earlier work and expand efforts to improve retention and reduce the number of all students placed on academic suspension. In addition, the project would introduce culturally specific strategies that would promote retention among Native students.

A national consulting firm would assess FDLTCC's needs and recommend strategies for recruitment and retention. They would train key academic personnel and advisors in best practices who would in turn train others. FDLTCC reviewed the research on retention of Native students in mainstream institutions and recognized the importance of culturally specific supports for tribal students. A pre-collegiate success camp would teach Native students first-year success skills and help establish social support early to connect students with academic and cultural mentors and advisors. The College would create a dedicated academic, social, and cultural support center for Native students. The

president would commit the financial resources to refurbish a campus building to house the new center and provide for tutors and other resources. The College proposed to bring in elders from the regional tribes for gatherings and language study, and provide students with cultural field trips so that Native students could grow in their cultural identities. They proposed to do research on best practices in retention and break out data for Native students.

Intellectual Capital Gained

To describe intellectual capital, the project team used the saying “a rising tide lifts all boats,” meaning that when everyone works hard to find the pieces that fit together, this raises everything up. Faculty and staff achieved this by making connections between new and old institutional practices and building relationships with students.



FDLTCC improved its capacity to retain students, and to support academic success and retention for its Native students. The grant provided the ideal opportunity for FDLTCC, with its two distinct cultural groups of students, to conduct research on best recruitment and retention strategies for Native and non-Native students. The College implemented unique supports for Native students. Preliminary data show that these strategies made a positive difference in the experiences and retention of Native students. FDLTCC strengthened institutional processes including data collection, contact with vulnerable students, and advisor practices. They hired a national consulting firm that reviewed their procedures and communications documents, and the College made several changes. They added evening tutoring sessions that improved retention for the overall student body. Improved communication processes resulted in an

increase in enrollment. Faculty members expanded their professional expertise and networks at a national conference on recruitment and retention, and shared their knowledge of best practices with others at the College. Because retention and student success are important factors in accreditation, FDLTCC’s use of *Woksape Oyate* funds to build institutional capacity in research and assessment will strengthen the College’s position for future accreditation processes.

A new Tribal College Resource Center for Native student support created a family-like atmosphere where Native students felt welcome and had greater access to academic and cultural support. The College provided resources from its general budget, which demonstrated a new level of commitment to its Native student population that had been missing. The center became their own place where students could connect with peers and seek help from advisors. Through the *Woksape Oyate* project, Native students gained a “sense of space and place” at the College and the improved academic outcomes demonstrated that the effectiveness of culture-based academic strategies.



The Tribal College Resource Center for American Indian student support

The “Nandagikendan: Seek to Learn” pre-collegiate success camp familiarized incoming first year Native students with the basic tools of college life. In the first weeks of school, the students participated in study groups, peer mentoring, and weekly support meetings. The College moved the academic alert timeline forward to allow faculty to intervene with struggling students earlier. By

week seven of their first semester, 29 of the 36 students persisted, and the college was successful in increasing its previous retention rates for Native students. Project activities also showed positive results for increasing graduation, and success in math and English for Native students. Because of the camp's success, the College has decided to continue this strategy as part of the first year experience program for new Native students.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

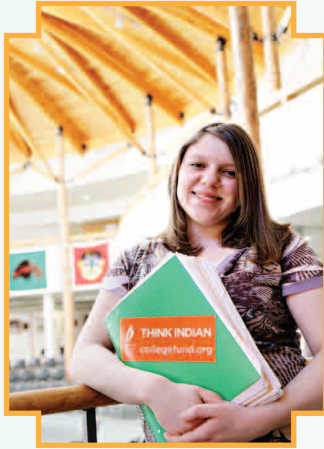
The College serves both Native and non-Native students. FDLTCC has come under scrutiny in the past by accrediting bodies and others in the tribal education movement because of its lack of culture-specific supports for Native students. The Fund encouraged FDLTCC to utilize the three-year grant as an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to serve tribal members. Their approach integrated standardized retention tools such as the Student Engagement Survey (SENSE) alongside culturally relevant supports such as peer mentoring, group meals, and place-based intervention. FDLTCC's project opened the door for them to demonstrate the importance of providing culturally appropriate support services and validated the usefulness of standardized approaches as well.

The College faced an unexpected challenge with the passing of the project lead in the fall of 2010. As they struggled to find someone to fill the position, faculty and staff worked hard to further his vision, especially in building relationships with students. The project struggled to gather and document the qualitative impact of their efforts specifically on Native students, which demonstrates an issue the College must continue to address: strengthening its identity as a Native serving institution and focusing retention efforts on Native students.

Models and Sustainability

The *Woksape Oyate* project created a new model for student support that other tribal colleges or mainstream institutions that serve Native students could replicate. The College learned that recruitment efforts should start earlier to better prepare students for the transition from high school to college. FDLTCC expanded the *Nandagikendan* pre-collegiate academy to high school students in 2011 and plans to offer an abridged single-day intensive orientation session for all entering students in Fall 2012. The College plans to expand tutoring hours and implement the peer mentor model of tutoring, which it found very effective in helping Native students, for all students. The project is sustainable because the College has institutionalized new and more effective practices, and the positive results enabled FDLTCC to secure funding from other sources to continue to develop retention efforts. Students who succeed in courses will continue over time, bringing more revenue to the College. When Native students complete their coursework, they will be better prepared to continue to mainstream universities, earn higher degrees, and give back to their people in meaningful ways. The project was on a short time line with only three years to implement interventions and test results. There is good preliminary data, but the College should go further and analyze data to demonstrate the relationship between culturally specific interventions and Native student retention and success.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Caitlyn Taylor is a 22-year-old sophomore at FDLTCC. She is pursuing her associate of science degree in Human Services as well as a certificate in chemical dependency. She is one of several students who are members of the Center for Academic Achievement Peer Tutoring Program.

Caitlyn told the following story about her decision to become a peer tutor, “Last semester I had to take statistics, and I remember being scared out of my mind because I had heard how hard it was going to be. To my surprise, once I was in the class, I found statistics was fun and I was doing pretty well in the class. The last week of class, as I was preparing for my final exam, I received a letter from the Center of Academic Achievement (CAA) asking if I would be interested in tutoring. I was completely shocked because I never thought of myself as a tutor. Now, I have been tutoring almost a whole semester and I absolutely love it. Tutoring has taught me responsibility, confidence, and patience. I also discovered that I learn better through teaching, which has really improved my own study skills. The friendships I have formed are the most important things I have gained from tutoring. I am proud of myself for tutoring, and I look forward to future work at the CAA and the Tribal College Resource Center!”

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Improved recruitment and retention for all first-year students

- 137 students attended evening tutoring sessions
 - ◊ 90% of students found the tutoring helped them succeed
- Student retention increased 10% between 2008 and 2010
- Enrollment increased 7% between 2009 and 2011

Goal 2: Increased American Indian student retention

- ◊ 76% of students in success camp finished first semester with 2.0 GPA or better
- ◊ 84% were retained for second semester
- ◊ 32 Native students per week took advantage of opportunities at the center
- Increased Native success between 2009 and 2011
 - ◊ 1.2% increased graduation
 - ◊ 5% improvement in math scores
 - ◊ 30% improvement in English scores

Goal 3: Increase staff knowledge of recruitment and retention

- Administrators attended national retention conferences
 - ◊ Increased knowledge of best practices
 - ◊ Shared knowledge with other supervisors
- 80% of advisors attended three webinars on student retention and persistence
 - ◊ Reinforced confidence in advising practices

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FORT BERTHOLD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



FORT BERTHOLD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

New Town, North Dakota

\$400,000

Academic Programs, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Fort Berthold Community College (FBCC or the College) serves a tribal Nation that is composed of diverse communities that are geographically remote from the College’s main campus. FBCC conducted a community needs assessment prior to the *Woksape Oyate* project, and found that over 80 percent of those surveyed had interest in enrolling in a bachelor’s degree program. Respondents ranked Native American Studies, and Indigenous language and cultural preservation as priorities for the College. To build baccalaureate degree programs that were academically rigorous and culturally relevant, FBCC needed to strengthen its cultural curriculum resources. The multiple tribes represented on the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara (MHA) Nation posed a unique challenge for developing appropriate frameworks. FBCC had an extensive collection of archived documents; however, it found that many were not useable or accessible. As well, many of their elders who held tribal knowledge were advancing in age, but they lacked the human resources to capture these resources. The College found that few of its academic programs encouraged Indigenous scholarship among its students. They wanted to engage more students in doing culture-based research and thereby fulfill FBCC’s mission to “preserve the past and prepare for the future.”

Project Design

FBCC initially proposed to use grant funding to catalogue the MHA cultural materials held on campus and in the communities it served, and convert these into usable resources for program development. The College wanted to develop additional curriculum packets to fortify the cultural content of

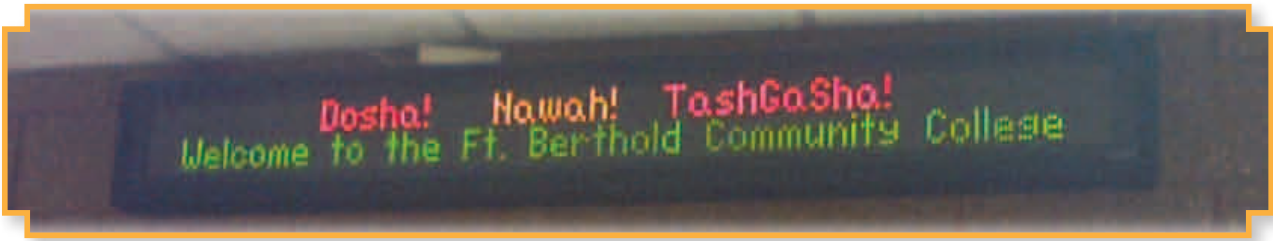
all its courses. These resources would help to strengthen the associate’s degree in Native American Studies (NAS), and support the development of new online and hybrid courses designed to reach its more remote constituents. To harness the imagination and scholarship of its brightest students, the College proposed a cultural honors program that would identify top students to research MHA cultures. These students would receive generous scholarships and stipends to write and publish a research paper, interview elders, and participate in service learning to meet the needs of their community.

Institutional Transformation

“ The project helped our institution that began 38 years ago in a leaky trailer achieve a most historical event: transitioning from a community college to a baccalaureate-degree granting institution. Intangible assets are as important as tangible assets. Tribal members are truly elated that the FBCC is now a sprawling campus with serious student scholars. Our college offers great returns on investment: great teachers, great leaders, great scholars, and greatness in general. ”

- Alyce Spotted Bear,
Vice President of Native American
Studies and Tribal Relations

The project was titled *Ma'da Aru Caa'wauo Gaxee' Adish*, a Hidatsa phrase meaning “the place which perpetuates our way of living.”



Fort Berthold Community College serves three distinct language and cultural groups

Intellectual Capital Gained

Alyce Spotted Bear led the project at FBCC and summarized their understanding of intellectual capital: “Intellectual capital is the intangible assets that help contribute to the growth of our tribal college. The knowledge and capabilities of our faculty and staff make us rich in intellectual capital. When our students gain knowledge and degrees, they prepare to take their place in society, work among our people, and carry the essential knowledge or ‘wisdom of the people.’”

The College gained accreditation for three new bachelor’s degrees, increased capacity to develop new degree programs, and reached an institutional milestone. The project met its original goal in 2010 for an accredited online associate’s degree in NAS, improving access to remote communities and providing opportunities for cultural studies. One year later, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approved FBCC for three new bachelor’s degrees and the work on the new associate’s degree provided good experience for that process. The College initially planned to seek accreditation for only two new degrees. FBCC then learned that with three accredited programs, it could apply for a change of institutional status and be eligible for new funding streams.

The Fund encouraged FBCC to redirect its *Woksape Oyate* program focus in year four toward developing its third bachelor’s degree in NAS. With the new associate’s degree and expanded courses already in



Honors students volunteered to teach younger peers at summer science camp

place, the College could draw on an existing framework and have students ready to progress to a new bachelor’s degree. The College accepted the challenge and added an entire new department for NAS. Institutional capacity grew with the creation of five new NAS positions: a vice president, an online education director, an online education specialist, a language assistant, and an instructor. These highly specialized personnel provided new educational role models for students and helped all departments to increase cultural programming. A short timeline required FBCC faculty to collaborate intensely. They gained new skills in institutional assessment, program review, course development, curriculum alignment, and accreditation processes. FBCC added upper level language courses, increasing its capacity for language preservation of three Indigenous languages in danger of extinction.

In 2011, the HLC approved the change of institutional status and accredited bachelor's degrees in NAS, teacher education, and environmental studies. The MHA Nation increased its educational access to professional education and this will affect their development far into the future. FBCC is one of only two institutions of higher learning in North Dakota that offers a bachelor's degree in Native American Studies. The College has a vision for more bachelor's degree programs, and credits the *Woksape Oyate* program for essential support in changing its institutional status.

The cultural honors program invigorated the College's academic culture and intellectual identity. FBCC knew that it needed to spawn a new generation of Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara scholars to ensure its academic vitality. Its faculty and cultural elders selected high performing students for research scholarships. The *Ma'da Aru Caa'wauo Gaxee' Adish* honors students raised the bar for academic excellence and leadership at FBCC. Students volunteered as science camp teachers at the MHA Earth Lodge Village and helped start a new student organization, the All Chief's Society. The College archives accepted student research papers and thus expanded its resources. Three student papers won first place in Critical Inquiry at the 2011 American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) competitions. When FBCC students had the opportunity to excel through cultural research projects and service learning, they became excited about their own potential and looked toward careers that benefit their communities. The cultural honors program will continue as a permanent addition to the NAS degree and student engagement programs at FBCC because the MHA Nation agreed to provide permanent funding for the scholars program at the end of the *Woksape Oyate* grant.



Alyce Spotted Bear, vice president of Native American Studies and Tribal Relations mentored honors students

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The *Woksape Oyate* project proposed to strengthen the College's program resources in Indigenous language education but found a challenge in creating curricula for three languages. FBCC had received funding from another grant to develop the Mandan curriculum. The *Ma'da Aru Caa'wauo Gaxee' Adish* project allocated money to hire elder consultants for the Hidatsa and Arikara language curriculum, but there were no FBCC staff members designated to conduct the work. The College enlisted the help of a doctoral student of linguistics from Indiana University (IU) and a linguistics professor from University of California at Chico to build the Arikara language program. University partners benefitted by gaining access to critical resources such as elder interviews, and FBCC found that its academic reputation helped attract reciprocal relationships with mainstream universities.

Models and Sustainability

FBCC's project far exceeded expectations in its development of a true cultural Center of Excellence. FBCC based its model on building partnerships across various public and private domains. The *Ma'da Aru Caa'wauo Gaxee' Adish* project worked with the MHA Nation to host an energy summit and a renewable energy conference, and opened these to the public. The College engaged school districts from all six communities on the Fort Berthold reservation to plan and implement the summer science and culture camp. The camp drew middle and high school students to FBCC and served as a tool for future recruitment. The College presented its camp model at the National Indian Education Association annual conference and several groups requested more information.

The reputation of the new NAS program attracted donations by two private donors for major collections of American Indian holdings. The University of Oregon and the National Park Service sought help from the NAS and FBCC archives to develop workshops on the role of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara in the Lewis and Clark expedition. Several visiting scholars who are tribal members shared their research at a community speakers' series. For example, Dr. Margaret Moss, a tribal member and head of Yale University's department of nursing presented on Native elders in long-term care. An Arikara doctoral student from the University of Indiana talked about cultural revitalization, and many Arikara community members were drawn to attend an event at the College for the first time. FBCC fostered the relationship between the last fluent Mandan language speaker and his younger mentee to ensure that this language lives on. The engagement of elders and the presence of highly educated and successful tribal members improved the academic credibility of the College. Tribal members as well as scholars from around the world now seek technical assistance from FBCC for their research needs. The success of the program helped secure resources to renovate and expand their cultural center, built under the previous Lilly funded campaign. The College's NAS program is the center for excellence for the three tribes' cultural histories and contemporary scholarship.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Ron Craig is a cultural honors scholar. He and other FBCC students attended the *Woksape Oyate* Summit on Intellectual Capital and presented their research projects. The Fund selected Ron to speak on a panel about intellectual capital from a student perspective. One of the students wrote this about the experience: "It is a great privilege to be a part of something so culturally academic. Working to become a distinguished student scholar, maintaining a great grade point average, and never missing an opportunity to learn something new are challenging opportunities. The cultural honors program will also help me to learn about our culture

and heritage from the elders. Our generation must learn the traditional ways, so we will be able to teach the youth appropriately, for they are our future leaders who will carry on our ways of life after we are gone."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Develop an online NAS associate of arts degree

- 20 NAS online/hybrid courses created; 14 offered
- NAS associate's degree enrollment increased by 65% between Fall 2010 and Spring 2011
 - ◊ First graduate Spring 2011

Goal 2: Develop NAS bachelor's degree framework

- 31 new courses developed
 - ◊ 10 students enrolled in the new bachelor's program
 - ◊ 2 graduates Spring 2012

Goal 3: Develop cultural resources to support new degree programs

- 500 new MHA resources added in the library
 - ◊ 30 Hidatsa language lessons recorded and transcribed
 - ◊ 15 Hidatsa cultural curriculum modules available for all courses
 - ◊ Video footage of elder and tribal speaker presentations added to archives

Goal 4: Develop student honors program for cultural research and leadership

- 24 honors students completed the cultural honors program
 - ◊ Learned culturally appropriate research methods
 - ◊ Presented cultural training for staff and peers
 - ◊ Research papers published in the local newspaper
 - ◊ Completed service learning projects in the community
- Honors students received national recognition
 - ◊ Research team selected to present at National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center
 - ◊ 8 students received top honors at American Indian Higher Education Consortium academic and cultural competitions



FORT PECK COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



FORT PECK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Poplar, Montana

\$250,000

Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Improved Student Engagement

“Prior to Woksape Oyate, faculty did not have an avenue that would support and encourage engagement within and outside the classroom. Now faculty members are requesting training in classroom engagement and service learning. Due to the satisfaction of faculty and students, this project is one that the institution has integrated into best practices and will continue to support.”

- Haven Gourneau, Project Lead and Vice President of Student Services

Identified Need

Fort Peck Community College (FPCC or the College) recognized that many of its administrators, faculty, and staff were nearing retirement. Among these individuals were American Indian people who had been instrumental in establishing FPCC’s standards of achievement. Geographic isolation, lack of competitive salaries, and limited opportunities for advancement seriously restricted FPCC’s ability to attract qualified professional staff. The College wanted to fill positions with qualified Native staff and develop students for future leadership roles at the College. FPCC had tried in the past to provide academic enhancement opportunities to its employees aspiring to attain professional degrees. Unfortunately, this effort had fallen short in filling available positions with qualified tribal members.

Project Design

The principal objectives of FPCC’s project was to develop Native staff through recruitment incentives, the positioning of qualified employees as adjunct faculty, and the support for students who would return as faculty upon degree completion. The project also aimed to provide a meaningful institutional forum through which faculty, staff, and students could hone their leadership skills.

Faculty members would also need to update their teaching and learning skills and learn how to be more effective in student engagement through degree work or participation in trainings. FPCC believes strongly that student persistence to graduation depends heavily on staff building positive relationships with

students. The primary strategy for student engagement would be service learning. Faculty would be encouraged to connect with students through community service activities and mentoring. Students would have direct opportunities for leadership development through seminars and workshops. FPCC’s goal was to develop a cadre of highly qualified and effective leaders who would acquire terminal degrees to prepare them for future leadership roles at the College.

Intellectual Capital Gained

FPCC defines intellectual capital as the collective intellectual spirit of the institution, gained through continuous development of the entire campus community. Nurturing employee and student knowledge, creativity, and unique skills enhanced the College's capacity to fulfill its mission.



Inauguration of new president
Dr. Florence Garcia

Recruiting and developing highly qualified employees had an immediate impact on improving the academic experience. The College's *Woksape Oyate* project focused on recruiting and retaining tribal faculty that were highly qualified. New promotional materials increased FPCC's capacity to attract both faculty and students. The College saw an immediate benefit, and FPCC found a relationship between highly motivated quality instruction and increased student success. As well, professional development improved efficiency of operations by providing key staff members with updated skills and practices. The College found that

growing and nurturing its current employees resulted in committed, long-term leaders who were prepared to fill vacancies due to retirement.

FPCC attracted new staff for administrative positions that were essential to program development, accreditation, and the president's succession plan. The College successfully recruited a Fort Peck tribal member who held a PhD for the position of vice president of academic affairs. Dr. Florence Garcia was a former schoolteacher and faculty member at Montana State University-Bozeman. FPCC's board hired Dr. Garcia to fill the president's position when its longtime president retired during year five of the grant cycle.

Advanced degrees for faculty improved the reputation of the College. Degree work was especially relevant for improvement in teaching and learning. New knowledge and skills from professional conferences or degree work prepared the faculty to revise and update course material, and strengthen or build new programs. Faculty members learned the latest best practices in their fields, and many implemented new technology into the classroom to decrease barriers for students. Successes under the program led to increased expectations for advanced education within the institution and in the community.

New student leadership programs created pathways for future leadership at the College.

FPCC also needed to develop a pipeline for future leadership. The College strengthened its student engagement programs by training students in leadership and faculty in best practices. All faculty members participated in developing engagement standards and learning outcomes, increasing interaction, and improving communication between students and faculty. The College implemented a new mentoring program called "Me a Kona." Every FPCC staff member committed to mentoring a group of students, and every student was assigned to a mentor.



Students participate in a skills training workshop

FPCC revised the entire first-year curriculum to include service-learning requirements, and staff mentors worked with them on community projects. The College offered a reservation-wide student leadership weekend for new college students. They brought in motivational speakers, provided community sessions, and engaged family members. The student senate developed a series of workshops designed for student success. The workshops showed positive results, and the College plans to offer them every year.

Learning Circles welcomed community elders and ensured that student leaders would be rooted in cultural values. Because community elders expressed a desire to help the students grow as leaders, the president provided a building dedicated to a new program. Elders held Learning Circles and shared traditional knowledge with students and their families. Students reciprocated by teaching elders how to use computers and access the internet. The elders returned to their rightful role as mentors and role models to the younger generations.



Native Elder Learning Circle, left to right: Myrna Charbonneau, Mike Todd, Iris Greybull, Mildred Clancy, Haven Gourneau, Pearl Nation

Challenges and Lessons Learned

FPCC initially assigned administrative team leaders and formed committees responsible for individual areas within the grant. All leaders and committees were to report weekly to the president, who would maintain the momentum for grant activities. After the resignation of the academic vice president near the end of the first year, this structure no longer worked. The College placed the entire grant under the vice president of student services, and developed an internal committee to monitor and advise the work under each of the project areas. This effective approach harmonized all the dimensions of the grant and produced the desired results.

Models and Sustainability

Service-learning projects became the cornerstone of student engagement with the community. The College institutionalized a new course on service learning that is now required for all incoming students. All first-year courses now apply learning through service projects. FPCC changed the way it viewed and supported institutional and student leadership, engagement between employees and students, and its own role in the community. Students persisted through their courses and felt more connected to the College while participating in volunteer projects. Due to the success of the grant projects, FPCC institutionalized several *Woksape Oyate* projects as best practices. The *Me A Kona* (mentoring) project, student and Elder Learning Circles, and student leadership training were all products of the grant integrated into regular ongoing activities.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Kathy Round Face was a recent graduate of FPCC who raises several of her grandchildren. When their home was condemned, the College helped the family find another residence, but it was in poor condition. Students from the College decided they wanted to improve the home as a service-learning project. They enlisted the help of community members and local organizations and welcomed donations of paint, wood, material, and labor. Kathy said their most critical needs were to paint the kitchen, make the bathtub usable, and paint her granddaughters’ bedroom pink.

FPCC students and their cadre of volunteers spent two weeks improving the home. As it turned cold and snowy, the group finished what they could and planned to finish the project during the warmer months. The bathtub was nearly finished, the kitchen was painted, and they were able to fill the house with donated furniture. The group was determined to finish the most compelling project, the pink room. When the girls saw their new room and said, “It’s the most beautiful room ever,” and “Now I can sit and do homework,” they made the day for everyone involved.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Recruit and retain qualified faculty and leaders

- 5 faculty and administrators recruited through relocation assistance
 - ◊ 4 new recruits are Native
- 3 key faculty retained through financial incentives

Project Goals and Results

Goal 2: Build institutional leadership through professional development

- 13 employee advanced degrees completed
 - ◇ 2 associate's degrees
 - ◇ 2 bachelor's degrees
 - ◇ 8 master's degrees
 - ◇ 1 doctoral degrees
- 9 employee advanced degrees in progress
 - ◇ 1 bachelor's degrees
 - ◇ 6 master's degrees
 - ◇ 2 doctoral degrees
- 100% of full-time employees attended training and updated skills

Goal 3: Increase student retention and build future leaders

- Faculty professional development focused on student engagement
 - ◇ 34 trained in student engagement
 - ◇ 5 attended training for retention of first generation students
 - ◇ 5 participated in webinar on increasing student retention
- 10 students attended “Building Engaged Citizens” service-learning training
- 4 students attended leadership training
- Increased student engagement by 75%
- Students produced peer leadership activities
 - ◇ 96 students attended workshops
 - ◇ 100% retention of students involved in service-learning projects
- 3 students earned leadership awards



HASKELL INDIAN NATIONS UNIVERSITY

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Elevating Indigenous Intellectual Capital

“As an institution of higher education, the importance of providing academic events which highlight the work of Indigenous scholars, educators, authors, activities and leaders is instrumental to the experience of tribal college students. The importance of seeing leaders, practitioners, activists and change-makers can be a pivotal experience for students looking for role models, particularly those who have overcome adversity to triumph in the end.”

- Dr. Venida Chenault,
Vice President of Academics

HASKELL INDIAN NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Lawrence, Kansas

\$250,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

The academic departments at Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU, Haskell, or the University) had worked together for several years on strengthening the Indigenous content and character of its academic program. Its continuing development of culturally infused curriculum would help overcome the legacy of assimilation as a former federal boarding school and help it meet its mission as a tribal institution of higher learning. The curriculum work had stalled and the University needed to reinvigorate it.

The inception of the *Woksape Oyate* program found the employees deeply divided and the administration unstable. The question of revising the HINU framework contributed to the internal conflict and posed other challenges. Haskell serves students from multiple tribes and is located in an urban area. Therefore, unlike other tribal institutions, it lacks immediate access to traditional knowledge keepers found within reservation communities. In addition, many of its faculty were oriented to mainstream higher education and did not always understand the need for creating a strong cultural base for the curriculum. The University hoped that an enhanced tribal experience would bring stability and common purpose, and would support recruitment and retention of students and faculty who value a teaching environment that celebrates tribal scholarship and identity in a modern world.

Project Design

HINU proposed to accelerate its efforts to strengthen the cultural foundations of its curriculum and campus life. The University would employ faculty decision-making processes

about the curriculum that would mirror traditional governance. They would promote culture-based teaching and learning by distributing common readings by contemporary Indigenous scholars and authors and expected faculty to incorporate these materials into their classrooms. To stimulate new Indigenous thinking, the *Woksape Oyate* grant would provide financial incentives for faculty and student research projects. The project would add the research products and curricula developed at HINU to a new online repository of teaching and learning resources called the RED Center (Research, Education, and Development Center).

HINU proposed to use some funding to bring tribal elders, scholars, and cultural experts to provide professional development for faculty, technical support for academic program reviews, and to develop cultural assessment tools. Having traditional knowledge keepers on campus would add an element of Native American wisdom that was missing at this urban tribal university. To engage students, the project would host cultural events that featured teachings by the visiting elders and scholars.

Intellectual Capital Gained

HINU's definition of intellectual capital evolved over many years as its mission changed from assimilation to Indigenous higher education. Haskell defines intellectual capital today as the Indigenous knowledge, strengths, resources, and capacities of tribal people.

The immediate impact of the project was the strengthening of academic programs by ensuring their cultural relevance. The project succeeded in meeting the intent of its proposal. Haskell prioritized *Woksape Oyate* activities in year four and completed an assessment rubric for evaluating students' cultural learning in all baccalaureate coursework. During the first three years, the project provided critical readings and professional development experiences that helped faculty build a foundation for unifying their vision and approach to Indigenous education. In years four and five, project resources supported campus visits by 10 Indigenous scholars, activists, traditional elders, and authors. These individuals brought a broad range of expertise about contemporary issues for American Indian people in a global society. While on campus, the scholars performed a variety of functions that helped raise the intellectual quotient at HINU. They stimulated critical inquiry among students and that led to continuing research and discovery. The visiting scholars consulted with faculty working groups and advised them on best practices in assessment of cultural learning and cultural content. The scholarly publications and research of the visitors became material for learning-groups that increased faculty confidence for infusing Indigenous knowledge in coursework. The faculty work groups completed the reviews, and the new standards set a baseline for improvement and became part of HINU's General Education Learning Outcomes policy manual. The *Woksape Oyate* project set up processes, piloted new evaluation tools, and most importantly, raised institutional expectations for keeping current with relevant Indigenous scholarship.

HINU's increased ability to implement culturally relevant curricula positively influences its accreditation. The completed reviews and new institutional policies provide real evidence that Haskell is accomplishing its mission as a tribal university. Most importantly, a strong culture-based education ensures HINU that its graduates will be prepared as future leaders to work with Native populations and organizations.

The overall cultural relevance of its academic programs helps position HINU to recruit and retain more Native faculty and students. HINU aspired to "re-center" itself culturally by including all participants in efforts to strengthen and infuse the "wisdom of the people" throughout the HINU experience. The project's preliminary assessment of recruitment and retention data confirmed that students coming to Haskell want and expect to experience culture-based education at a tribal institution of higher learning. The project provided numerous direct opportunities for student access to Indigenous knowledge keepers. HINU engaged students in defining contemporary issues that they found relevant. Students helped identify particular authors, activists, and scholars for campus presentations and thus contributed in a meaningful way to Haskell's cultural direction. HINU sets an example for other TCUs that want to empower students in defining their educational experience. Satisfied students will be ambassadors for recruitment to the University.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

HINU received funding late in year one of the grant. The Fund awarded the project during a period when serious political conflicts between the faculty and president were coming to public attention. The Bureau of Indian Education determined it necessary to detail the president to another campus and appointed a series of interim presidents.

While at Haskell, the president appointed a *Woksape Oyate* project lead that was at odds with the academic departments and lacked authority to implement key objectives. In the first few years, the project lead made good efforts to infuse cultural experiences throughout the campus. Despite her best efforts, she was unable to engage the academic departments in the curriculum work. The goals related to professional development, program review, and governance went unfulfilled in the first three years. As she became more isolated in the project management, some expenses did not support the intention of the grant. The Fund's project officer met with the interim president and budget officers at Haskell and outlined a remedial plan to restore project funds that did not support the approved program.

At the beginning of year four, the Fund recommended that the project move under the office of the academic vice president to allow direct influence over the portions of the project related to strengthening the academic program and improving teaching and learning. The program reviews had progressed without project support during that time, so the resources provided welcome and needed support for continuing the work. When the grant refocused on the academic program goals, the University discontinued the work on the RED Center website. The Fund hopes that HINU will find the resources to continue developing the online repository of Indigenous scholarship and resources for instruction.

Models and Sustainability

HINU models the kind of persistence, determination, and collaboration that is typical at tribal colleges and universities. Although the project had challenges in the first three years, the University responded to the opportunity to refocus, resituate, and restore the grant so that it met its goals successfully. The project reinforced Haskell's vision for shared governance as it energized the quest for current and appropriate cultural curriculum. The academic vice president took leadership and sold the importance of immediate action, and rallied a strong response from all participants. She found common interest for restoring and strengthening an Indigenous framework for teaching, learning, and the social experience at Haskell. Fresh out of a period of institutional upheaval and leadership instability, the project provided everyone on campus a meaningful chance to be of service, and this increased investment, morale, and cohesion.

TCUs all base their academic programs on the recovery and infusion of tribal thinking and social values, and HINU modeled the traditional cultural value of inclusive decision-making and actions to benefit the whole. The academic departments structured the review processes to reinforce the agreed upon core values of accountability, respect, cooperation, and honesty. Student-led cultural events developed leadership and shared decision-making skills that will serve Haskell graduates in their future careers in service to tribal people. The cultural assessment rubric, use of outside consultants to advise program review and content, and advisement by tribal leaders, elders, scholars, and students all moves HINU forward in its capacity to reverse the legacy of devaluing tribal ways of knowing and doing.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



In the fall of 2011, the *Woksape Oyate* grant supported a student event to strengthen Native American culture and drew attention to contemporary issues that affect American Indian communities. The Social Work Club selected the issue of suicide and invited special guest Dirk Whitebreast to meet with faculty and students. In 2003, Dirk lost his sister to suicide while he was attending HINU. He left the university to be with his family and began a journey of sobriety and wellness that set a positive example for others. Dirk ran 262 miles, or 10 marathons within 30 days to raise awareness about youth suicide. He donated all the money that he raised to support suicide prevention at the Center for Native American Youth.

Lilly Bobb is a junior at HINU and a member of the Social Work Club that arranged for Dirk's return to Haskell. She was inspired and motivated by Dirk Whitebreast's story. "He overcame a huge obstacle in his life and has changed his life for the better. Instead of turning to alcohol to deal with this tragedy, he put on his old running shoes and went for a run. He has been running ever since. I could relate to his story because I have lost very close family members. It was difficult for me as well, but my escape and way of dealing with the deaths in my family was to come to Haskell Indian Nations University to further my education and work to become a social worker so I can help my community. The event had a great turn out and students left with positive thoughts and motivation. Events like this bring the Haskell community together to learn positive things and to support what other students are trying to do for the community."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase knowledge exchange with tribal elders to support linkages to traditional knowledge systems

- 8 student-developed cultural learning events hosted
 - ◇ More than 700 HINU faculty and students, University of Kansas faculty and students, local K-12 teachers, tribal and community members attended
 - ◇ Cultural learning modules developed on presentation content for classroom use

Goal 2: Increase access to current Indigenous research and epistemologies to strengthen cultural content for teaching and learning

- Speaker Series hosted 10 noted tribal scholars in multiple forums
 - ◇ 3 core texts and materials distributed to all faculty and staff
 - ◇ Faculty developed related course assignments
- New human resources policy favors hiring faculty with Indigenous language teaching capabilities
 - ◇ 1 new hire teaches Choctaw language
 - ◇ 6 new language courses added to the catalogue
 - ◇ Courses enrolled to capacity
- 4 faculty and 3 students received research incentives and awards for Indigenous research projects
- HINU began constructing a website to house project artifacts and research
 - ◇ Digital recordings of cultural presentations preserved for future classroom use

Goal 3: Strengthen Indigenous content in baccalaureate program and implement cultural learning assessment protocols

- 4 baccalaureate degrees reviewed for appropriate Indigenous content
- Academic departments finalized and approved cultural learning assessment rubric



INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN
INDIAN ARTS

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Revaluing Indigenous Knowledge

“People began to see each other as resources and see the threads of commonality between personal stories. We were connecting the ‘big story’ with our personal life stories. This funding has allowed us to continue growth as an artistic and an intellectual community. That is our capital; it is increasing.”

- Dr. Ann Filemyr,
Dean of Academics

INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS

Santa Fe, New Mexico

\$400,000

Academic Programs, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA or the Institute) has a fine reputation as a Native arts institution; however, the Institute found its graduates lacking in a strong liberal arts foundation required for advanced academic degrees.

IAIA addressed these concerns by developing a general studies baccalaureate degree based on Indigenous worldviews. The Indigenous Liberal Studies (ILS) bachelor’s degree program received accreditation in 2006 but was not fully developed or marketed, resulting in lower than expected enrollment. In addition, graduates emerged as highly skilled artists but lacked business acumen. Art brokers often sifted off much of the artists’ potential profits. Alumni and community stakeholders frequently encouraged IAIA to incorporate an art marketing and business component in its curriculum.

Project Design

The *Woksape Oyate* project proposed to strengthen the ILS program and recruit students to the major. IAIA would hire one new full-time faculty to facilitate a stronger strategic plan for the program and ensure its academic and cultural relevance. The new faculty member would also design and implement a new business and entrepreneurial studies certificate program to help graduates achieve economic self-sufficiency. The Institute hoped that the certificate coursework would provide the framework for a new bachelor’s degree in

business and entrepreneurship. Further, IAIA proposed to develop new courses, provide online access to ILS programming, hire several new adjunct ILS faculty members and traditional art instructors, and bring cultural wisdom keepers to the campus. The project wanted to share its Indigenous expertise with the campus and community. IAIA would host lectures and forums by faculty and other scholars, convert them into podcasts, and house them on its website to make the Institute’s intellectual capital accessible to a wider audience.



Intellectual Capital Gained

IAIA came to define intellectual capital as “the collective wisdom and knowledge of our community—students, staff, faculty, and environment.” At the end of the project, IAIA believed that the project’s legacy and its greatest asset was its institutional awareness of its own indigenous knowledge held within its premier Native art faculty.

IAIA elevated its institutional self-perception from a college that develops Native artists to one that graduates Native artist scholars and business

leaders. IAIA’s new business certificate program is the only program in the United States focusing on the business of art for Native students. The program successfully prepares Native artists to become self-sufficient entrepreneurs. The certificate format allows students to access higher education without the intensive time and financial requirements of a full degree course of study. Several graduates have continued on to advanced degree work and are starting their own businesses. Jennifer Coats, project lead, called business skills a “new toolbox” for Native artists that move their ideas beyond self-employment. Native entrepreneurs will share their business knowledge and help develop new economic opportunities that benefit their extended families, communities, and tribal Nations.

IAIA refined its program design processes to one based on data-driven decisions. IAIA was underprepared to create new programs when the project started. It lacked the institutional data necessary to develop a competent strategic plan and structure courses that would meet accreditation standards. The project hired consultants who conducted the institutional and market research needed to guide the ILS program revisions, develop the new certificate program, and create a strategic plan for the proposed bachelor’s degree. One consultant produced several professional reports that IAIA will use in the upcoming accreditation review to demonstrate a demand for a business degree. The framework for the bachelor’s degree is still in development. The Institute is continuing research to ensure the program is sustainable and the best fit for its constituencies. The project gives IAIA the opportunity to create a business school that fills a unique need in higher education.

The Woksape Oyate focus on intellectual capital helped the Institute recognize and enfranchise the depth and breadth of their own unique intellectual wealth. Initially, the proposal called for IAIA to bring outside experts to campus to provide faculty professional development and community education forums. The first conference was on repatriation of tribal artifacts and sacred objects, and several well-known scholars presented. The conference was a success, but the Institute found that it took significant human and financial resources and detracted from the overall objective of building the ILS program. When the College hired the project lead in year two, she suggested a new approach that would be less costly and more efficient.

Other universities often sought out IAIA’s faculty as Native art scholars, but the Institute had not capitalized on the vast knowledge within its staff. Faculty members presented seminars on their own areas of expertise, and the project collaborated with museums and other institutions of higher learning to bring new knowledge to the campus. IAIA made audio recordings of the presentations and posted them as podcasts to a new Intellectual Capital page on their website. The podcast initiative expanded the Institute’s intellectual influence on the art and education worlds, and in the

community. The website increased access to lectures among all academic departments and captured the intellectual capital among the faculty at IAIA, which led to increased institutional pride and confidence in its place in higher education.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The project had trouble filling the new faculty position that would oversee the grant. The business field was entirely new for IAIA, and the job description was not yet clear. The hiring process required two rounds of recruitment and interviewing. Ultimately, the Institute selected Jennifer Coots in the beginning of year two. She is a member of the Navajo Tribe, is a traditional weaver, and a small business owner with an MBA in Finance from the University of New Mexico. Her grandmother had also been a traditional weaver, and as a child, Jennifer watched how business people at local trading posts devalued the delicate work produced by hand by Navajo artisans. Her graduate work focused on how business education could influence economic development in Indian Country. Thus, she was the perfect fit to lead the project. She had the education, the practical experience, and personal connection to the needs of Native artists and entrepreneurs.



Jennifer Coots, project lead, describes the IAIA *Woksape Oyate* project at the evaluation training

The project proposed to develop online ILS coursework, but IAIA found it lacked the capacity and infrastructure to accomplish this objective. Jennifer's personal work ethic, drive, and creativity allowed her to push through the challenges, engage all the stakeholders, and accomplish the grant goals in a manner that exceeded expectations. The project and its processes helped IAIA to rethink recruitment, hiring, and program management needs for new academic programs.

Models and Sustainability

IAIA's institutional readiness assessment and market analysis creates a model for other institutions that wish to build new programs. The project lead worked with consultants to survey and interview stakeholders, and review institutional documents. They looked at challenges for recruitment, curriculum development, possible expansions for the distance-learning program, and institutional goals. The reports provided solid evidence for program development. IAIA's successful implementation of the business and entrepreneurship certificate positioned it for additional funding. IAIA received the prestigious Johnson Scholarship Foundation grant for tribal colleges with business and entrepreneurship programs. A Santa Fe donor sponsored a new \$480,000 endowed full-ride scholarship for 10 business students. Enrollment in the certificate program increased each semester, creating a new stream of revenue for the Institute. The president of IAIA committed to fund the certificate program through the general budget.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Mr. Roanhorse (center) described Ms. Morales (right) as “completely indispensable” in the weeks leading up to Indian Market

Joanne Morales (Taino) was preparing for her spring 2010 graduation when Jennifer Coots received a phone call from a prominent Santa Fe artist. “Artist Michael Roanhorse said he specifically wanted an intern who had completed our new business and entrepreneurship certificate program.”

At first, Ms. Morales found the prospect of working with a professional artist intimidating. She asked Mr. Roanhorse about his specific needs and saw that she was prepared to meet them. In a few weeks, Joanne became the first business intern from IAIA’s new program.

Joanne found the business program served her well throughout the internship. Working out of Mr. Roanhorse’ shared studio, Joanne found herself immersed with clients, galleries, the press, and a variety of famous artists. Time management skills were crucial for the artist’s participation in the Santa Fe Indian Market, the world’s largest Native art market and exhibition. “Accounting helped because I was trying to help manage getting the lowest price and best quality for his money. I was also keeping track of my hours, things he owed – at times I was pretty much running the show.” Thanks to Joanne’s hard work and success, for a new partnership between IAIA business and entrepreneurship certificate students and the Santa Fe arts community developed.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Strengthen ILS program and increase its enrollment

- Five-year ILS strategic plan developed
- 8 Native arts faculty hired
 - ◊ 8 new courses offered
- 15 faculty colloquia hosted
 - ◊ 34 audio podcasts housed on website
 - ◊ 31 videos created new instructional resources
- ILS enrollment increased by 250% between 2007 and 2011

Goal 2: Establish and market certificate program in Business and Entrepreneurship

- 5 new courses created, approved, and implemented
 - ◊ Enrollment grew by 100% between 2009 and 2012
 - ◊ 15 students completed the certificate between 2009 and 2012
- 4 adjuncts and accounting tutor hired
 - ◊ 90% of students passed courses
- New marketing materials created

Goal 3: Create the framework for a new business baccalaureate program

- 2 reports framed a plan for degree development



KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Role Models

“Positive role models inspire students to better themselves, setting higher educational goals and career paths, and more importantly, showing their family members or children that they can do it by believing in themselves.”

- Cherie Dakota, Dean of Student Services

KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Baraga, Michigan

\$150,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC or the College) received the *Woksape Oyate* award in the third year of the grant cycle. The College became eligible for funding when it received candidacy status for accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in 2009. Candidacy status requires that KBOCC enhance institutional capacity by improving employee credentials, integrating culture into the curriculum, gaining financial autonomy from the tribe, and developing opportunities for student leadership and governance.

The College’s mission is to provide education based on tribal culture, yet only 46 percent of faculty were tribal members. Similar to other small rural colleges, KBOCC’s geographic isolation prohibits travel for advanced professional development and restricts its ability to attract highly qualified employees. KBOCC desired to create opportunities for Native employees to advance to faculty positions or higher levels of administration with a broader impact of inspiring tribal students to continue in higher education and return as leaders. The College lacked opportunities for student leadership

development. They also saw a need to build the skills and knowledge of the board of regents who understood the cultural foundation of the college, but lacked the professional background to administer effectively and demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

Project Design

KBOCC would build Native staff credentials by providing support for advanced degree work. All faculty members, staff, and the board of regents would have professional development opportunities related to their role at the College and receive cultural competence training. As well, the project would provide assessment training for all employees to help them acquire the skills to plan, conduct, and apply assessment of student learning. Assessment data would fuel continual improvement of instruction, feed into overall institutional development, and help prepare the entire college for the accreditation process. Faculty professional development activities would produce higher quality coursework and enhance student services. Training for the board of regents would give them the skills and knowledge to effectively administer the College and position it for full accreditation.

KBOCC also proposed a new student leadership curriculum, including professional development and mentoring opportunities to increase student engagement and provide a leadership pipeline for the future.



Liz Julio attended financial aid training and KBOCC promoted her to financial aid director

Intellectual Capital Gained

KBOCC finds its intellectual capital in students, staff, faculty, and the board of regents. The College reported that employee excitement around intellectual capital gained momentum throughout the project as KBOCC developed and enhanced efforts to “grow their own.”

Native staff members gained advanced degrees and transitioned to higher levels of responsibility. The project succeeded in developing leaders among tribal employees. These employees in turn developed new programs or services that helped KBOCC meet accreditation requirements and fulfill its mission. For example, one staff member received a tuition scholarship to pursue a master’s of business administration degree. The College subsequently promoted this employee to business officer, and her degree work enabled KBOCC to offer business classes for the first time. She is currently developing a business program for the College.

Professional development improved critical student services, the effectiveness of the board, and helped the College provide a rigorous culture-based higher education. With accreditation candidacy, the College became eligible for Title IV. Three staff members attended training and gained crucial skills for establishing a financial aid program. KBOCC promoted one staff member to financial aid director, and her training helped the institution develop the necessary policies for administering federal financial aid. More students gained access to financial support, and subsequently, enrollment at KBOCCC increased by 30 percent.

Training allowed board members to become more familiar with issues facing institutions of higher education through attendance at meetings of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and an HLC conference on accreditation. Assessment and leadership trainings enabled the board to link the budgeting process more accurately to strategic planning. New skills and knowledge prepared the board to revise administrative policies that moved the College toward full accreditation.

An Ojibwa cultural advisor trained all faculty members to integrate culture into the curriculum and provided assistance with research to develop lesson plans. All courses at KBOCC now include Native ways of knowing, which helped it meet its mission to provide education based on tribal culture. Non-Native faculty members, who had been reticent to teach unfamiliar content, were empowered by new cultural knowledge. Faculty and students embraced the opportunity to share their own stories and experiences, which made coursework more relevant to students and increased their classroom engagement. As well, one staff member participated in an *Anishinaabemowin* language program and apprenticeship, and the tribe certified her as an Ojibwa language instructor.

Mentoring and leadership development opened new horizons for students and inspired them to expand their vision for potential careers and higher education opportunities.

Training sessions taught students the foundations of leadership, critical thinking, life-balance skills, and creating resumes. First-year students had the opportunity to participate in two new workshops on student success and building leadership skills. The training sessions guided a core group of students in creating and ratifying student government by-laws and conducting formal elections. The student

government president serves as a non-voting member on the board of regents and provides input in decision-making. Leadership development empowered students to serve as role models for their peers and engage the institution and the community, and prepared them to become future leaders.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Some KBOCC employees found it difficult to finish professional development activities because of individual time constraints. Advanced degree work, trainings, and attendance at conferences took faculty and staff away from the school and added more responsibility to already heavy workloads. KBOCC updated policies to allow employees time off to participate in professional development activities, which alleviated some of this strain and provided incentive for employees to participate in trainings and development activities outside of their normal duties.



Student leadership group at Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College

Models and Sustainability

KBOCC had difficulty applying existing models for assessment of student learning outcomes. Most available protocols fit the needs of larger institutions. Faculty members worked together during monthly assessment workshops and a four-day assessment retreat to adjust their model for smaller student samples and a smaller institution size. Institutions with large student bodies have to rely on outside readers that examine a sampling of student work to evaluate the writing instruction. Since KBOCC is small, faculty can read and assess a single student's writing across multiple courses. The Assessment Committee has a fixed membership that does not vary from semester to semester. This enables students to receive consistent and personalized feedback on all writing assignments. By evaluating all students over time and multiple courses, the College gets a true picture of how well it accomplishes program standards. This approach allows KBOCC to tailor academic interventions based on the individual student needs.

The College reports that its greater capacity for institutional assessment and the investment of the entire faculty and staff in improving institutional effectiveness will sustain the project's accomplishments. While they have yet to find another source of funding, the College now places a higher value on professional development, and they believe they will find resources to continue the program.



HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Megan Shanahan began working at KBOCC in May 2008 as an admissions officer and adjunct instructor, teaching a computer class. When the **Woksape Oyate** project began, the president offered her the opportunity to pursue her master's degree at no cost. Although this was always a dream for her, financial constraints had left it at that—a dream with no reality in sight.

Megan started at Wayne State University in southern Michigan in fall 2009. However, after traveling over eight hours each way for exams, it was not feasible for her to complete the degree at a campus so far away. After researching options, Megan decided to pursue her master's of business administration degree online through the University of Phoenix, enabling her to continue working full time and teaching classes while taking a full load of courses.

Sixteen months and twelve classes later, Megan completed her master's degree. Her degree qualified her for promotion to KBOCC's business officer and allowed her to begin teaching business classes. She used her new skills to revise accounting policies and develop new policies with the financial aid office. The **Woksape Oyate** grant allowed Megan to further her education, assume new responsibilities at KBOCC, and fulfill a life-long dream.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase qualifications of tribal faculty and staff

- 6 employees funded for advanced degrees
 - ◊ 1 master's of business administration degree
- Degrees in progress
 - ◊ 1 associate's degree
 - ◊ 2 baccalaureate degrees
 - ◊ 2 master's degrees

Goal 2: Increase rigor and relevance of class work

- 4 faculty members attended professional development training in their field of study
 - ◊ 1 Native instructor completed welding educator certificate
- All faculty and staff received assessment and cultural competence training
 - ◊ 100% of course learning outcomes reviewed
 - ◊ 80% of learner outcome assessment plans completed
 - ◊ 100% of all curricula updated with Native cultural content
- Assessment data incorporated into accreditation self-study

Goal 3: Administrators are efficient and effective

- 6 board members received training
 - ◊ Increased understanding of roles and responsibilities
 - ◊ Tribe transferred financial accountability to KBOCC, meeting accreditation standards for financial autonomy and fiscal responsibility

Goal 4: Prepare students for leadership

- Student engagement increased by 15%
- New leadership training program produced
 - ◊ 2 new workshops for first-year students
 - ◊ 7 new student leadership trainings
 - ◊ 10 students participated in all trainings
- Student leadership professional development
 - ◊ 8 students attended conferences and workshops
 - ◊ 2 students presented at NASA research conference
- 3 students attended training with faculty mentor



LAC COURTE OREILLES
OJIBWA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



A New Intellectual Spirit

“The *Woksape Oyate* project gave staff opportunities to earn advanced degrees, advance to new levels of responsibility, and improved academic and student services. The project infused a new spirit of intellectual excitement that will guarantee our future growth as an institution of higher learning.”

- Ray Burns, Project Lead

LAC COURTE OREILLES OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Hayward, Wisconsin

\$400,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC or the College) found that its isolated rural location made it difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff. It realized that it had fallen behind in meeting its institutional mission and needed to grow its own employees to increase academic rigor, develop leadership, and to promote future growth.

A survey conducted prior to its *Woksape Oyate* proposal found a high interest among LCOOCC employees for advanced degrees and job-specific knowledge. Employees reported that tuition and associated costs were barriers for seeking further education and training. Human resource procedures needed updating at the College to increase capacity for strategic professional development that would improve institutional effectiveness.

Project Design

LCOOCC proposed a strategic plan that would create a new committee to revise and oversee professional development processes. Each department would review its efficiency and effectiveness, and identify areas for growth. The Professional Development Committee would see that every administrator, faculty, and staff member had a comprehensive professional development plan that linked performance measures to

institutional improvement. *Woksape Oyate* funds would cover tuition for advanced degrees, and conferences and trainings to build skills and professional networks in critical positions. The College proposed to develop new accountability measures to assure that employees shared knowledge gained for the betterment of the institution as a whole. The College hoped their plan would promote employee retention, develop future leaders, improve academic quality, and eventually increase student success.

Intellectual Capital Gained

LCOOCC recognized that its employees held its intellectual capital. The *Woksape Oyate* project invited a broad dialogue about how the College develops and invests its institutional knowledge. The project helped LCOOCC refine its thinking about professional development, realizing that an exciting learning environment is integral to its ability to attract and retain qualified employees.

The spirit of intellectual capital and new faculty degrees became drivers of expanding academic programs. Thanks to new knowledge and skills gained through advanced degree work, program participants guided the revision of entire academic programs and updated numerous department policies and ways of working. For example, the College's business chair completed his doctorate and subsequently helped upgrade the entire business division program to reflect current trends and practices. The advanced credentials of nursing instructors allowed the College to implement a new associate's degree in nursing, one of the few in Wisconsin. A faculty member, who is obtaining a doctorate, will lead the new nursing program. One faculty participant began collaborating with Indigenous peoples in Central America to develop a sustainable living program, bringing international recognition to the College. The director of a National Science Foundation initiative for incorporating Ojibwa knowledge into the College's curriculum credits his *Woksape Oyate* activities with supporting the demands of that project. The focus on intellectual capital improved employee morale, academic creativity, and commitment to institutional growth and development. There is a new expectation for employee higher education credentials at LCOOCC because of the *Woksape Oyate* project.

Professional development allowed the College meet accreditation standards, streamline services, and improve student outcomes. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) recently mandated that LCOOCC increase its assessment capability. With increased staff academic credentials and new knowledge, the College was able to update learning standards and initiate institutional assessment plans. The *Woksape Oyate* project enabled LCOOCC to provide critical skills for 77 percent of its employees, and 16 employees completed advanced degrees. This met the accreditation criteria related to "improving the quality of education by acquiring, discovering, and applying new knowledge" and translated to improved organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Project participants updated the knowledge and skills needed to streamline the student services department with new technology and operational systems. Most faculty and staff took advanced degree courses in online format, and these experiences provided new ideas about improving the College's own distance education programs. Academic outcomes are improving, but the College needs more time to evaluate how professional development has influenced the upward trends. Many students have observed that faculty and staff are involved in their own continuing education, and this shows the students how to juggle full time work and school, and persist. Graduation rates improved over the past two years, and more students are moving on to pursue four-year degrees. The faculty believes that professional development has changed the institutional culture of learning, and this has led to increased course rigor, which better prepares students for continuing studies.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Initially, the College experienced a challenge in recruiting employees to participate in continuing education, and it learned that it needed to update its educational leave policies. With improved financial and institutional supports in place, program participants enrolled in graduate courses and were successful in accomplishing their goals. Other employees quickly saw the benefits of advanced degree work, and the requests for funding increased. LCOOCC provided resources beyond the grant funding to meet the increased demands.

As employees gained degrees, other challenges emerged. Budget and personnel cuts at the College increased the workload for all staff. LCOOCC was unable to offer salaries commensurate to education levels. Those already engaged in academic programs struggled to continue their higher education. A third of the project recipients left to seek other employment. The project lead interpreted this positively by relying on a tribal value that requires sacrifice for the greater good. One employee who obtained a doctorate is now a tenured professor in Indiana and promotes collaboration



with TCUs. Another employee advanced to law school, and continues to apprise LCOOCC of legal implications of education policy. Increased opportunities for professional development, employee morale, and institutional pride proved to be “bargaining chips” that helped to retain many more *Woksape Oyate* participants. Intentionally nurturing growth for the benefit of the whole institution has created a desirable and exciting work environment that does not depend wholly on a salary schedule.

Models and Sustainability

The College developed a new model for priority-based professional development, accountability, and growing leadership from within. It no longer feels the gap in qualified local people who can fill personnel vacancies. Out of this project, seven staff members received promotions to higher levels of responsibility because of updated skills or advanced degrees, and the College retained all of these employees. Furthermore, project recipients volunteered for committees and demonstrated stronger leadership qualities such as confidence in expressing their opinions and insights. The greatest return on investment was the number of people able to move up in LCOOCC’s organizational structure, ensuring leadership and future stability for the institution.

The College targeted a core interdisciplinary group of staff who understood the importance of strategic planning based on institutional needs. The accountability model created the expectation for employees to invest new knowledge into institutional improvement and required documentation on how participants would incorporate their new knowledge into curricula or job functions. A strategic institutional commitment to professional development benefits students as well, because it models the importance of life-long learning.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Ray Burns expressed doubts in the beginning about whether tribal college faculty and staff needed a doctoral education. He discovered, as the **Woksape Oyate** project unfolded, the wisdom of developing leadership through higher education. Ray is now in his third year of doctoral studies. The College president, who was near retirement, elected to utilize her leadership development funds to send Ray to the Future Leaders Institute sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges. When her husband's health required that the president retire early, the board selected Ray as the College's interim president.

Ray reflected, "Throughout the first few years of the project, the committee and I debated what intellectual capital was, and what it meant in context of tribal

colleges. At the same time, I took advantage of the professional development funding. I worked toward my master's degree in higher education leadership and moved into the position of dean of student services. Others in the **Woksape Oyate** project were undergoing similar transformations. It was obvious that the project was helping people professionally. What was less obvious was the passion created by these opportunities. Participants understood that the institution truly valued their personal intellectual capital. At tribal colleges, intellectual capital includes a unique vitality and depth, such as the cultures of the tribes represented by the tribal colleges. Our **Woksape Oyate** project empowered the College's employees to represent the pride, the dream, and the cultural heritage embodied by tribal colleges."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Encourage recruitment and retention from within the current staff

- 44 employees funded for professional development
- 16 employees completed degrees
 - ◊ 2 doctoral degrees
 - ◊ 4 master's degrees
 - ◊ 3 advanced to doctoral programs
 - ◊ 6 baccalaureate degrees
 - ◊ 4 advanced to master's programs
 - ◊ 4 associate's degrees
- 5 project-funded employees continue baccalaureate work
- 66% of project participants retained

Goal 2: Increase staff and faculty leadership capacity through professional development activities

- 7 project recipients received promotions to higher levels of responsibility
 - ◊ All were retained
- 1 employee installed as interim president when president retired early



LEECH LAKE TRIBAL
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

LEECH LAKE TRIBAL COLLEGE

Cass Lake, Minnesota

\$400,000; Supplemental \$48,586

Academic Programs, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

In order to strengthen its academic programs, Leech Lake Tribal College (LLTC or the College) first needed to address a major challenge: a high percentage of its students were underprepared for college and many failed to make adequate progress once enrolled. LLTC had a high average retention rate of more than 85 percent in first year English and math courses; however, by graduation many of its students still lacked the skills to continue to four-year degrees. Data from 2004-2007 showed high failure rates including 68 percent in first year English courses and 48 percent in a pre-collegiate math courses. Prior to the grant, the College recognized that its academic reputation had dwindled along with enrollments and that teaching and learning was not effective. Many instructors lacked the ability to engage underprepared students. Some had been at the College for five to ten years and came from professional backgrounds other than education. LLTC wanted faculty to learn best practices in classroom instruction and wanted to improve its approach to student academic support. The College had designated space for a learning center and named it *Nando-Gikenjige Wigamig*, which in *Anishinaabe* (also known as *Ojibwa*) means “a place where someone learns.” They had not yet developed a plan for services.

Project Design

LLTC proposed to use its *Woksape Oyate* grant to change its academic culture to one focused on student success and improving faculty skills. It would launch *Nando-Gikenjige Wigamig*, create a new director position, provide professional development for instructors, and hire professional tutors. The director would work half time with the learning center, and

teach half time in English. The College envisioned the center as a source for more than remedial support but rather for individualized student instruction that would strengthen independent writing capability and math skill. Center staff would provide instructional support to faculty as well. LLTC wanted their efforts to result in increased student and teacher self-confidence, and students would acquire effective communication skill needed to expand their educational horizons. The College planned to hire student tutors who had demonstrated academic success, and would extend leadership

A Learning Community

“The *Woksape Oyate* project transformed Leech Lake Tribal College from an obscure ‘reservation school’ to a vibrant center of academic excellence that gained national recognition. The impact of this project is felt far beyond the borders of the reservation, as Learning Center staff and peer tutors develop mentoring programs at other tribal colleges, pursue further education for themselves, and embark on careers in which there is currently an acute need for Native American professionals.”

- Dr. Ginny Carney, President

professional development opportunities to them. To strengthen teaching LLTC would bring to campus professional workshops for all faculty members that would help improve student engagement.

Intellectual Capital Gained

LLTC defined intellectual capital as a superior education grounded in their tribal culture and a campus community that honors teaching, learning, and service. The traditional *Anishinaabe* values of humility, truth, courage, honesty, respect, love and wisdom framed their view and encouraged them to keep student success at the core as they built their intellectual capital.

Peer tutors contributed to improved student outcomes, changed their self-concepts, and advanced to higher studies.

The greatest return on investment of the *Woksape Oyate* grant was the leadership growth among the LLTC student tutors. The project proposed to hire five students, but by year five had engaged and trained 25 students for the program. The peer tutors became important contributors to the overall improvement in teaching and learning at the College. They led professional development seminars for the faculty and supported classroom learning. Soon, the faculty began to regard them as colleagues and invited their voice in discussions of teaching and learning. Students recognized them as allies and role models. Peer tutors hosted a weekly lecture series for first-year students and took on other needed service projects. For example, three tutors provided young parents with evening childcare and a hot meal. Many students said they would not have been able to attend classes without this service.



Peer tutor Charles Dolson helps fellow student

Several peer tutors found they enjoyed teaching, and changed their aspirations to academic or other careers requiring advanced education. Several graduated and went on to earn baccalaureate degrees. For example, Charles Dolson, of the Red Lake Band of Ojibwa, was LLTC's salutatorian in 2009. A former peer tutor in math, Charles graduated with honors in 2011 from Bemidji State University, received a presidential fellowship and is currently a full-time student at University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis.

LLTC grew in credibility as an institution of higher education. The *Nando-Gikenjige Wigamig* successes increased institutional pride and promoted enrollment. The peer tutors served as ambassadors for the College in community outreach activities, and marketing materials featured the successes of the learning center. LLTC credits the learning center with helping to change the community's perception of the College. The president received unsolicited feedback from the local state university about the noticeable improvement in academic preparation of LLTC graduates. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) recognized increased student enrollment and improved institutional capacity when it recommended 10 more years of accreditation. With its improved math scores and more rigorous courses, the College received full accreditation for a new natural science associate degree. In 2010, the Washington Monthly rated LLTC as 7th among "America's 50 Best Community Colleges."

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The learning center had a positive challenge when it outgrew its designated space. The College provided a larger space and faculty increased their volunteer tutoring. A more serious challenge involved high turnover in the director position. The highly qualified director hired in the second year of the grant gave the program a strong launch and initiated faculty training and campus-wide collaboration. When she moved to the academic dean position, and later left for graduate school, more faculty members and peer tutors stepped up their volunteer tutoring time. This enabled continued momentum for improving LLTC's teaching and learning. In the last year, the College filled the position with a highly qualified tribal member, and she has kept the program moving forward.

The lack of leadership at times caused LLTC to miss the mark on its measurement of program outcomes, and to attend to some of the objectives under its supplemental grant received in year three. The College made good on its supplemental goals to publish a learning center manual and to train four other TCUs on its model. It formalized a coalition of *Anishinaabe* colleges and established an online communication forum to sustain the sharing of best practices in teaching and learning. However, LLTC found that after the initial meeting, other colleges were not ready to move forward with developing their own centers and did not wish to attend a second training. The Fund worked with the College to design alternative strategies to replace this activity, but none materialized. The Fund requested LLTC return the part of the supplemental award in year four, and the College did not receive additional supplemental funds in the final year of the grant.

Models and Sustainability

Improving teaching and learning became the focus of the entire campus community. LLTC designed and executed a model that they shared with other TCUs. The model involved collaborative and inclusive planning across the campus to address the serious challenges in retention and academic success for first year students. Instructors took ownership of the problem and the solution by identifying professional workshops that helped them develop a true learning community and provide better academic support. The learning center became a training facility for faculty and for student tutors. Peer tutors moved into classrooms and provided direct help and encouragement that kept individual students motivated. With hands-on assistance from the learning center staff, instructors felt empowered to try out new engagement strategies that improved student satisfaction and retention. Retention rates in math courses remained at close to the baseline; however, more students achieved a "C" grade or better than before the grant began, and overall passing grades improved by 15 percent in English courses. The College saw increased graduation and completion rates and an increase in students transferring to four-year institutions.

LLTC reports that because of the intellectual, social, and emotional impact of the learning center at the College and in the greater Leech Lake community, they will find the resources to sustain *Nando-Gikenjige Wigamig*. The College hired a new full-time grant writer who is working with a team of LLTC faculty and staff members to secure future funding. The College already secured new funding from several sources including the Minnesota Department of Health, and the National Science Foundation. Based on the success of the **Woksape Oyate** project, the Wal-Mart Foundation awarded the College for a new mentoring project.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

Kim Dickson is a young *Anishinaabe* woman and a highly respected role model for other students. Kim is actively engaged in community and cultural events. Although she has five children and must commute some 100 miles round-trip each day to take classes, Kim is a full-time student and has served as a peer tutor at the learning center for the past three years. She has a cumulative GPA of 3.88, and qualified for the fall 2010 President’s List after earning a 4.00 GPA for that semester.



As a peer tutor, Kim not only works with students who need assistance with math, English, Ojibwa language, or other courses, but she can often be found calming a distraught student, giving encouragement to someone who is considering dropping out of school, or mentoring new peer tutors. Kim is a campus leader and served as vice president of LLTC’s student senate. She honed her leadership skills when she presented at national conferences, local workshops, and at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit of Intellectual Capital held in Denver in 2011.



Nando-Gikenjige Wigamig: The Learning Center

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increased math and English success

Between 2006 and 2011, LLTC learning outcomes improved

- 15% improvement in pre-collegiate and first year English scores
- 1% improvement in pre-collegiate math scores; no improvement in first year math
- 90% increased enrollment in advanced math courses
 - ◊ 21% of all LLTC enrolled in higher math
 - ◊ 100% of Fall 2011 students enrolled in advanced college algebra and pre-calculus passed, with no withdrawals
- 40% increase in STEM majors

Goal 2: Increase student enrollment, retention, and graduation

- 13% increased enrollment from 2007-2011
- 10% increased overall retention from 2007-2011
- 72.2% increased graduation from 2007 to 2011

Supplemental Goals

- Goal 1: Disseminate learning center model
 - ◊ Learning center training manual published and disseminated to regional TCUs
- Goal 2: Increase professional skills of peer mentors and center staff
 - ◊ Number of students presenting at conferences tripled in 2008-2010



LITTLE BIG HORN
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



LITTLE BIG HORN COLLEGE

Crow Agency, Montana

\$700,000

Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Over the past several years, the Crow Tribe advanced toward increasing sovereignty and self-sufficiency with a new constitution and economic infrastructure. Little Big Horn College (LBHC or the College) needed to revise its academic programs to provide for growing employment needs and to prepare future leadership for the tribe. However, the College was concerned because its student population was growing younger and appeared more underprepared for college-level work. The Nation's brightest students continued to leave the reservation to attend college and often did not return to reinvest their intellectual growth at home.

The College had problems recruiting and retaining qualified Crow members to fill faculty and executive positions. LBHC had experienced high turnover among top executive team members, and its board was concerned that less than half of faculty and staff at the College were Crow tribal members and included only a handful alumni. The board hired a new president in 2002 and charged him with raising the academic expectations for student success and increasing the number of tribal employees at the College. LBHC wanted to develop the skills and credentials of the executive leadership team while preparing the College for the president's eventual retirement.

Project Design

LBHC designed an innovative project to strengthen the academic environment among all participants and fill leadership gaps at the College and in the Nation. The *Woksape Oyate* project would simultaneously develop executive leadership and a cohort of young leaders. Further, LBHC proposed outreach strategies to recruit and advance more Native faculty for executive roles.

Raising Expectations

LBHC recruited top-performing students who formed a leadership cohort that modeled a higher level of academic excellence for peers. College executive team members mentored student leaders and taught leadership classes. These two strategies secured future leaders and raised expectations across campus for executive and academic performance.

“Our resource is our young people, and they are going to become our future leaders. If we don't do anything for them, how are we going to expect them to be good leaders?”

- Dr. David Yarlott, President

The College proposed to develop the executive team members through professional development, advanced degrees, and mentoring. The team members would pass their leadership knowledge and skills by mentoring students. Executive team members designed and taught sections of a new



Frederica Lefthand, academic dean; Ronnea Gramling, student leadership program ; Franklin Cooper, chief information officer; Gary Stevenson, student leadership program

leadership seminar that gave students the opportunity to learn directly from readily available role models. In addition, the College planned an annual series of leadership workshops that would be open to all community leaders.

The project would build a cohort of future Crow leaders by attracting highly successful students to the campus. LBHC proposed to recruit top-tier graduates from surrounding high schools through personal outreach by executive team members and offered mentoring, leadership development, and competitive financial aid packages. LBHC created a Student Leadership Program (SLP) from among these

scholars and hoped that these students would stay in the community and reinvest their leadership within the tribe.

Intellectual Capital Gained

LBHC found its intellectual capital in the untapped leadership potential of its students, staff, and community. Their project surpassed expectations for growing executive and future leadership, and in setting the tone for leadership development throughout the Crow Nation.

LBHC improved executive team functioning and created a model for leadership development. Each member of the executive leadership team developed individually through targeted training, advanced degree work, and attending national meetings with the president. Executive team members got to work directly with students to pass on their leadership skills and knowledge. They developed curricula together and taught about their area of executive expertise for a new student leadership seminar. It is unusual for top leaders at a college to have the opportunity to teach. This experience helped develop a stronger commitment and passion among the executive team, and put them in touch with the strengths and challenges of the students they serve at LBHC. Team members became important role models for students and the community, demonstrating Crow leadership and higher education achievements.

Top executive team members became highly visible on campus and in their communities. They performed outreach and recruitment activities to reservation high schools situated in their home districts and shared leadership skills with community and tribal leaders, in annual leadership seminars. All six team members reported improved confidence and self-concept as a leader and the improved ability to work together. The increased job satisfaction and morale eliminated executive turnover during the course of the project. Executive team members prepared for succession as shadowing activities with the president help improved their ability to lead in his absence. The president is proud of the fact that the executive team is comprised of all Crow tribal members, each holding a minimum of a master's degree.



Three LBHC executive team members received their MBAs in 2010: Beverly Snell, financial aid director; Teatta Old Bear, dean of students; Aldean Goodluck, chief financial officer

LBCH raised expectations for academic performance and leadership for all students. The project succeeded in encouraging top local graduates to remain on their reservation to seek higher

education. Their presence helped to attract other students who might otherwise have left the reservation to attend college and LBHC has seen more traditional college aged students enrolling.

The executive team adopted these scholars and mentored them through direct experience in policy-making, program management, and service-learning projects. They participated together at conference presentations and community meetings. These high-performing leaders on campus changed the faculty's perception about the academic capabilities of tribal students.

Participants modeled responsibility and academic success for their peers and adhered to strict requirements for class attendance, high grade-point averages, and active leadership in community service activities. Other students observed the tangible benefits of excelling in school and leadership and responded by emulating the scholars. The project exposed students to living Crow leaders; elders participated as lecturers and increased awareness of Crow leadership traits.

Program participants changed the vision for student leadership for all students. They recommended that the College offer the leadership seminar to all students, and NTC extended it to all freshmen. The project also provided incentives to all faculty members to identify and mentor other students not selected for the leadership cohort. Emerging student leaders expanded their professional visions and self-concept as future leaders at the College and in the community.

LBHC established itself as the community center for leadership development. The College recognized its responsibility to create leaders for the tribe's future. It worked hard to "grow its own" through attracting and retaining high performing students, Native faculty, and developing qualified institutional leaders. The project was successful in renewing hope within the Crow Tribe that its young citizens will be prepared, interested, and available as future leaders. LBHC shared its intellectual resources with the entire community by hosting annual leadership seminars that featured keynote speakers from the tribe, mainstream business, and from academic fields. Up to 100 community leaders attended each event and LBHC received increased demand for future trainings. The rising number of highly qualified tribal members increased the educational role models within the community and created a stronger academic and executive leadership pool.



Leadership Students, executive team,
and the board of trustees

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Busy executive team members had to stretch to find the time needed to develop their own skills and new course curricula, and engage with students. This was overwhelming for most and in the first year, no team member took on the added responsibility to attend a conference and bring a student to mentor. LBHC learned that the commitment of resources and time must come from the top. At LBHC, the president led by example by mentoring the executive team members and students. He made sure that the College directed incentives and resources to professional

development and student mentoring and all members of the team subsequently participated.

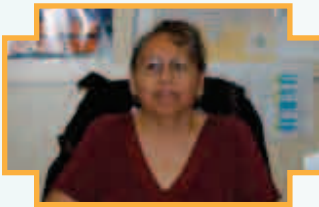
Models and Sustainability

The *Woksape Oyate* project at LBHC proves that tribal colleges can and should have confidence in their people. Its model included leadership development across the organization and throughout the community. The LBHC president demonstrated this confidence by sharing decision-making power and knowledge with his executive team and staff, faculty and students, and with community leaders. The leadership development model included all program participants from beginning to end, and

involved good initial planning and continuous evaluation. The president expected all team members to be open-minded, try new things, and consider challenges as learning experiences. The president mentored and coached all executive team members to function autonomously in his absence, which resulted in a natural model of succession planning.

The LBHC SLP created changes in the institutional self-concept and is a model that other TCUs should consider replicating. The SLP permanently changed the College's view of students and its role in training future leaders. The College sees itself as a leadership training ground and institutionalized processes that will nurture the leadership capacity of every student, employee, and community member. The College believes that its increasing enrollments signal a shift in community perception toward LBHC and that the improvements in academic climate will persist after the grant ends. The Fund recommends that LBHC develop a plan for longitudinal research on leadership cohort and plan multiple ways to disseminate the model and the results.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Teatta Old Bear, the dean of students at LBHC, is truly a success story of the College. Graduating from LBHC and going on to Montana State University-Billings, she completed a bachelor's degree in human services in 1996. Ms. Old Bear worked for the Crow Tribal Head Start Program as a classroom teacher for 14 years before beginning work with high school, and later, college students.

Ms. Old Bear was born with a physical disability that resulted in her having some limitations, and she was not able to participate in physical activities. She worked hard to overcome the barriers she faced; she did well in school and kept a positive attitude. However, she did not view herself as a leader. Ms. Old Bear's self-concept had held her back for a long time, as she did not feel she had the capabilities to take on leadership roles. When LBHC hired her, the Selection Committee told her that she had not been their first choice since she did not have a master's degree. However, the Board of Trustees recognized that Ms. Old Bear, being a graduate of LBHC, a Crow language speaker, a member of the tribe and local community, and having experience working with students from preK-12 did have the characteristics and traits they sought in a dean of students.

Through the strong team building activities of the executive team component of the Wisdom project, she feels she has really grown in her self-confidence and she sees herself as a leader and a contributor to the students and the College overall. Ms. Old Bear graduated in 2010 with an master's of business administration from the University of Mary. When she talks to the Student Leadership Program participants about the importance of self-concept, she speaks from experience, and she is truly helping students become leaders.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Upgrade executive skills and knowledge of the executive team

- All 6 executive team members updated professional skills in their executive function
 - ◇ 3 completed master's degrees
 - ◇ 1 doctoral degree in progress
 - ◇ All 6 attended leadership trainings

Goal 2: Recruit and retain the most academically talented Crow students

- 30 students selected for the Student Leadership Program
 - ◇ 90% completed Leadership Seminar
 - ◇ 90% maintained a 3.26 GPA and near perfect attendance
 - ◇ All students conducted community service projects
 - ◇ 80% graduated or were retained, compared to 40% of general student population
- 7% increase in overall enrollment from 2007-2011

Goal 3: Recruit the best talent of the Crow Tribe for new or vacant faculty and executive positions

- 11 Crow tribal members hired 2007-2012
 - ◇ 3 have graduate degrees (2 master's degrees and 1 doctorate)
 - ◇ 1 has a bachelor's degree
- Crow tribal member employees increased by 28% since 2002
 - ◇ 88% of employees are Crow tribal members
- 87% of employees have a one-year certificate, associate's, bachelor's or graduate degree



LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE

Winnebago, Nebraska

\$400,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska chartered Little Priest Tribal College (LPTC or the College) in 1996, but the tribal council cut funding to the College by 73 percent over several years. Decreased revenue contributed to instability in key staff positions at the College. In its first 10 years, the College changed presidents 16 times, with more than 100 changes in other top administrative positions. The College attributed turnover to inadequate personnel policies, limited opportunities for professional development, infrequent performance reviews, and inequitable salary schedules. Student services and academic programs also suffered because of the institutional instability. In March 2007, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) warned that continued attrition in leadership could endanger LPTC's accreditation. The College needed to find a way to improve employee retention and institutional stability. Passion for the mission was high, but employee morale was low. Without the proper skills, support, and compensation, its human capital would continue to deteriorate, and the organization would not be able to function as a competent institution of higher learning.

Project Design

Using *Woksape Oyate* funds, the College's president sanctioned an immediate assessment of community higher educational needs and expectations for the College. An external consultant surveyed the community, and LPTC contracted with a national firm to poll students and

employees. The grant proposal focused activities on revising human resources policies and procedures to make the work environment fair, welcoming, and supportive. The College requested resources for training to standardize professional skills across campus and for advanced degrees for faculty and critical administrative positions. The overall goal of the project was to ensure that the College met accreditation standards and its obligation to provide appropriate higher education for the Winnebago people.

Forging Solidarity

“The most significant impact of grant activities was solidarity among faculty and staff. Morale, which had been down because of the loss of key administrative personnel, has improved. The improvement shows in the way that people functioned together after the trainings, working as effective teams in order to address accreditation and other pressing day-to-day needs of the institution.”

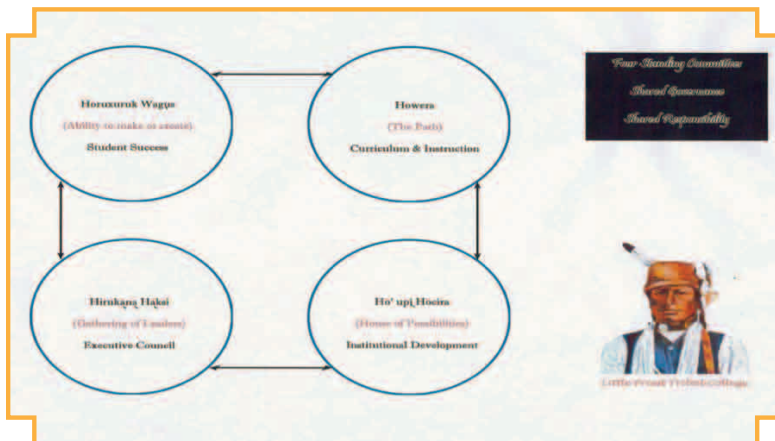
- Darla LaPointe, Dean of Admissions

Intellectual Capital Gained

LPTC knew its intellectual capital resided in its people as the collective organizational knowledge within the institution. The College reports that it will continue to utilize the concept of intellectual capital with a name in their tribal language (*Hocak*) that best describes the collection and sharing of the knowledge for the greater good.

LPTC was successful in creating a more attractive and productive work environment. The *Woksape Oyate* grant allowed the College to revamp its human resources department. The project team reviewed LPTC's human resource policies and procedures, and revised all job descriptions to reflect accurately each position's roles and responsibilities. Supervisors designed professional development plans for every employee at the College. A new employee orientation and welcoming packet was developed, and the employee handbook updated. The human resources department is working currently with the board to match pay schedules with credentials and performance.

The project set strategic priorities for institution-wide trainings to professionalize core skills and knowledge to industry standards. Several trainings common to all employees focused on team building, customer service, and communication. Cross training improved efficiency and helped coordinate department workloads when vacancies existed. Training supported new processes for the College's business and financial services and improved student services such as admissions and financial aid. Despite continued turnover in top positions, most middle-level administrative teams remained in place. Employee morale improved as a sense of growth and equity emerged.



LPTC streamlined its governance structure

The College engaged the entire campus in strategic planning and promoted shared decision-making. LPTC recognized that for it to accomplish its mission, all participants needed to be empowered decision-makers. The project provided resources for appropriate and relevant training to improve the job performance and efficiency of every participant from the board to administrative staff. The board of trustees received training that helped to

disentangle its relationship with the tribal government, and this helped resolve a concern of the HLC.

The board created a new mission statement and revised institutional policies and procedures that guided strategic development. A new president came to LPTC in year four of the grant, and his leadership style encouraged shared power, a perspective that the staff and community received well. The *Woksape Oyate* program provided necessary resources to train and engage the entire campus community in institutional assessment and strategic planning. Along with an improved understanding of job responsibilities, the project positioned all staff to help streamline the organization. The strategic planning process reduced the number of active committees on campus from fifteen to four: Student Success, Curriculum and Instruction, Executive Council, and Institutional Development. Tribal elders named the committees in their *Hocak* language, which demonstrated the College's commitment to the people it serves. The meaningful work of each committee allowed leadership growth from within, built institutional capacity, and reduced the

College's reliance on outside consultants. The board approved the five-year strategic plan and the College found a new solidarity in working together to improve the institution. LPTC considers this the *Woksape Oyate* project's most important outcome.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

LPTC learned that professional development alone could not remedy its long-standing problem with employee attrition. There were systemic and structural problems that the College needed to address before it could effectively implement staff development. During the course of the grant, LPTC continued to experience turnover in executive and top administrative positions; there was turnover in 14 of 20 key positions targeted in the proposal. Had the president's position remained stable, however, the passion and dedication of a core group of administrative support staff might have gone unnoticed. Instead, the commitment of this group sustained the College through its challenges, keeping the doors open and meeting student needs to the fullest extent possible. Advanced degrees for core staff allowed the College to promote four to positions of greater authority and responsibility.

LPTC's greatest lesson was that it had the capacity for strong leadership among its own staff and needed to nurture that capacity. It found that, given opportunities for assessment and professional development, a small college *could* strengthen operational functioning and position itself for longer-term stability and academic excellence.

Models and Sustainability

Community assessment turned out to be a key ingredient in the overall success of the program at LPTC. The results showed what steps the College needed to take to live up to the community's expectation for higher education. The assessment also revealed that LPTC needed to increase the visibility of its programs and opportunities. The newest president and the community education director reached out to the tribal government and its departments to see how they could collaborate for professional training and continuing education. This outreach improved community perception and sentiment about LPTC as a meaningful resource for tribal growth.



LPTC Class of 2011 was the largest in its history



LPTC's entire faculty and staff played a role in strategic planning processes in 2011

The community input also caused the College to review and revise its academic program. Professional development and advanced degree work of its faculty supported strategic assessment and program modification. Faculty and staff eliminated five degree programs and retained five others that would best serve its constituents.

The math department adopted a technology-based instructional approach with demonstrated effectiveness for developmental math students. Faculty received training to help integrate cultural concepts into its revised curricula, and LPTC faculty authored and published a biology textbook founded on Indigenous scientific principles. The College expanded its core requirements to include a college success course, an English composition course, and an information technology course.

The changes at the College strengthened the connection and trust between LPTC and the people it served. Board training proved critical in improving the operations of the College and its relationship to the community as well. The board opened its meeting to the community, increasing transparency and accountability between LPTC and its constituents. Because of the president's outreach, improved financial operations, and the improved capacity to meet the needs of the community, the tribe restored funding to the College. LPTC had a record number of graduates in 2011, which demonstrates the true return on investment in improving the learning environment. To sustain the gains it has made, the College requested a change in its Title III program from the U.S. Department of Education that will provide funding for the continuing staff development.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Sharon Redhorn-Chamberlain graduated from LPTC in 2006 and has been working for the College since October 2008 as the community education director. Sharon said, "I worked closely with the first **Woksape Oyate** project director to identify professional development opportunities for staff and develop incentives for advanced degrees. I took part in any and all the workshops I could and benefitted from these directly as a new employee. For example, I took a tribal budgeting workshop with a group of co-workers that I use on a daily basis, keeping accurate records, and organizing data for better reporting. The training I received has made me a more efficient and organized employee, one who is proud to be a part of my team. I am working on my bachelor's degree in business and human resources, and I am learning how professional development and continuing

education benefits the organization. I will continue to take college courses, and hope to have my degree within the next year. I have been putting together a plan of action for getting my master's degree, and I will keep taking classes until I reach my goal. I plan to continue to serve the College as I attain my educational goals. The **Woksape Oyate** grant has been a great asset to the college, me as an individual, and for the staff overall."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Build staff, faculty, and board leadership competence to increase institutional stability

- President, board, and team of 13 faculty and staff trained for accreditation self-study
- 5 staff completed advanced degrees
 - ◊ 2 associate's degrees
 - ◊ 3 master's degree
- 14 staff in progress toward advanced degrees
 - ◊ 9 associate's degrees
 - ◊ 2 baccalaureate degrees
 - ◊ 3 doctoral degrees
- 4 staff promoted to fill key administrative positions

Goal 2: Strengthen organizational structure through staff development

- 11 core trainings increased professionalism and job performance of all staff
- All staff participated in institutional assessment and strategic planning
 - ◊ Organizational governance structure streamlined
 - ◊ Student services became more accessible
 - ◊ The academic program improved its relevance
- Increased student enrollment, retention, and completion (Fall 2007 to Fall 2011)
 - ◊ 34% increased enrollment
 - ◊ 13% increase in GPA (from 2.15 in 2007 to 2.44 in 2011)
 - ◊ 11% increased math and English course completion
 - ◊ 300% increased graduation



NAVAJO TECHNICAL COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

NAVAJO TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Crownpoint, New Mexico

\$250,000

Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Navajo Technical College (NTC or the College) found itself at a crossroads in its development between a technical college that granted associate's degrees and a full-service institution of higher learning. They wanted to become a baccalaureate degree-granting institution, but found that staff credentials and board functioning were lacking.

NTC received considerable funding from state, federal, and private entities to engineer and coordinate the *Internet to the Hogan* project, a major technology infrastructure and internet connectivity project on the Navajo Nation. To ensure this project's progress, the College needed to provide additional education and training for its staff.

In addition, the College's most recent accreditation report revealed that many faculty members were under-qualified for their current positions and that too few Native instructors had higher education credentials. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) also found that to continue its existing accreditation, NTC administrators needed to strengthen their higher education management skills across multiple dimensions of organizational functioning.

Project Design

NTC's first priority would be upgrading the faculty credentials to prepare for baccalaureate degrees in technology education. The College also wanted to continue its position as the premier provider of technology services in the region, including as a leader in the *Internet to the Hogan* project. The



Investing in Human Capital

Project results

“... demonstrate the importance of building human intellectual capital, which creates a culture of success. It creates pride in the community and the College, especially among students, and causes students to work harder to keep the success going. This leads to a growing student body, more funding for the College, and, hopefully, to major changes in the community that end the idea that Navajos have to be poor. They do not.”

- Mr. Tom Davis, Dean of Instruction

administration would revise its approach to professional development and the human resources director would implement an appropriate professional development plan for every employee. Administrative capacity would grow with training for the board and the College president. The project would provide funding for faculty and staff advanced degrees, with a focus on developing the information technology department and supporting higher credentials for Navajo instructors. The academic dean would develop a Navajo leadership program for several promising young Navajo employees. The College would give these individuals opportunities to earn instructor status and

higher positions of leadership. They would get advanced degrees and receive mentoring from experienced faculty and administrators. Finally, the College would start a student honors program to encourage student achievement and plant the seeds of leadership in the next generation.



The STEM Lab Peer Tutoring Project with other NTC honors students and faculty advisors

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College defined its greatest resource as the expertise, credentials, and leadership capabilities held by instructors, students, administrators, and board members. The project resulted in growth across all these groups.

NTC earned accreditation for its first baccalaureate degree

program and improved the technology infrastructure of the Navajo Nation. Advanced degree work ensured that NTC met HLC requirements for employee professional development. The project provided for training, technical instructor certificates, and support for advanced degrees for employees in teaching positions. Native faculty increased their academic credentials and became the majority of those holding advanced degrees.

The HLC renewed the College's accreditation for another eight years. In addition, having sufficient numbers of faculty with appropriate credentials for higher education positioned NTC to obtain accreditation of its first baccalaureate program in information technology and a new associate of science degree in registered nursing. The College now has the skills and success in developing new degree programs for accreditation. It has begun to create other new baccalaureate degree programs in math, science, and engineering. Once NTC obtains accreditation of three programs, it can apply for a change of status to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution. This will mean eligibility for new funding opportunities and strengthen its academic reputation.

The new knowledge gained by technology program faculty also helped the College fully implement the *Internet to the Hogan* project. This brought broadband internet connectivity to NTC and the surrounding region. As well, the College grew its capacity for offering online courses by implementing two web-based instructional systems, which improved educational access to the vast rural Nation.

NTC improved its credibility as an institution of higher learning and increased enrollment.

The academic environment increased in rigor following the advancement in faculty degrees. Faculty incorporated more research in their teaching and students now engage in environmental and energy research, technology field internships, and creative capstone projects. All classroom instructors received training in experiential learning methods, and NTC applies this pedagogy across the entire academic program. This hands-on and applied-learning approach is culturally relevant and gives technology graduates an edge in a highly competitive job market. During the years of the grant, enrollment at NTC nearly tripled. Surveys reported that the principal reason students enrolled at the College was its reputation for academic excellence.

Student engagement contributed to high rates of retention. New programs, combined with national recognition for student engagement and leadership efforts, contributed to increased enrollment and retention. The College now retains students at rates above 70 percent, compared to

51 percent nationally. The Aspen Institute, a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., recognized NTC as one of the 120 best community colleges in America in 2011.

NTC established a chapter of a national student technical honors society and initiated a dean’s list to recognize academic achievement. Several students ran for state and national leadership positions within national technical student organizations, and they succeeded in their bids. The College increased the responsibilities of the student senate to oversee many aspects of student leadership programming. The board approved an additional position for the president of the student senate, increasing the student voice in top-level decision-making at the College.

The honors society inspired an increase in overall grade point average for many students who wanted to qualify for the programs. Student leaders attended national meetings with NTC’s president, and became peer tutors to support academic success in the more rigorous courses developing at the College. All honors students engaged in numerous community service projects and participated in national competitions that brought positive attention to the College. Students gained confidence through leadership activities and competitions and these activities enabled students to view themselves as innovators and movers.

Models and Sustainability

NTC improved its administration of human resources by institutionalizing fair processes for employees to receive support for professional advancement. Annual professional development plans resulted in 25 percent of all staff engaging in higher education for degrees or certifications. The establishment of the Professional Development Committee empowered faculty and staff to lead NTC’s efforts to increase the number of employees with advanced degrees. Success in this area led the board to approve a line in the general budget for continued professional development support. The board itself changed their practices dramatically after grant-funded trainings and attendance at higher education and community college meetings. Through exposure to outside peers, NTC’s board could better assess their functioning and visualize the kinds of changes needed at the governance level to move the College forward.

NTC’s model committed to developing each participant in the circle of learning. The president set the tone with his dream of unlimited possibilities for the institution, its students, and the Navajo people. The mentoring program for Navajo staff reflects an old way among traditional people, where elders recognize talented young people and groom them as future leaders. The board ensured that the College has the necessary resources in future budgets to continue advancing employee knowledge and skills required in their fields. NTC’s model for professional development is sustainable because it improved shared governance and institutional effectiveness and efficiency.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

In an effort to focus project funds on professional development opportunities, the College failed to reserve adequate funding for staff to manage the project. NTC had difficulty responding to the Fund’s requests for biannual project and budget reports. Their budget expenditures did not



NTC Board: Lynda Lovejoy, secretary/treasurer; Tincer T. Nez, Sr., vice-chair; Tom Platero, chair; Richard Begaye; Harry Claw; Sharon Cooley, student senate president

follow the approved budget and they failed to follow the grant agreement regarding budget changes. The Fund attempted to assist the College in developing remedial strategies. Problems persisted, and in year four, the Fund reduced NTC's award and put the College on notice of potential termination for year five. NTC turned over project leadership to a young administrator who had received project support to complete a master's degree in business administration. She conducted a full project audit, proposed a revised budget that was in line with the approved proposal, and saw to it that faculty tracked and properly organized professional development outcomes for reports. The NTC project received year five funding and improved its completed subsequent reports on time. The lesson for the Fund and the TCUs is to ensure that all grants, regardless of award size, assign adequate staff time to manage the project and assure accountability.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Ryan Preston Whitehair reported on his experience as a member of a student technical organization. "I am a first year student in the Energy Systems program at NTC. When I enrolled, I did not know that I would be able to be a part of an organization that would change my life. My experience with Skills USA has enriched my life in so many ways. It has given me the leadership tools necessary to succeed in life. Skills USA teaches students not only the technical skills necessary to be successful in the workforce but also the soft skills that will ensure employability. It is definitely a benefit for NTC students to have this organization available. It has

been integral part of my learning experience. With our isolated location, it is great that NTC offers such a great club for students to join to give them something constructive to do with their time. I look forward to being continuously involved during the course of my studies at Navajo Technical College."

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Improve faculty credentials

- 8 employees completed advanced degrees or certificates
 - ◊ 1 technical certificate
 - ◊ 2 associate's degrees
 - ◊ 2 baccalaureate degree
 - ◊ 3 master's degrees
- 15 employees in progress toward advanced degrees
 - ◊ 3 associate's degrees
 - ◊ 4 baccalaureate degrees
 - ◊ 3 master's degrees
 - ◊ 5 doctorates

Goal 2: Increase the leadership capacity of Navajo employees

- 7 Navajo employees promoted due to increased academic credentials
- Increased percentage of Navajo faculty from 46% to 61%

Goal 3: Increase administrative leadership capacity and effectiveness

- Board training resulted in
 - ◊ Improved legislative advocacy skills and understanding of federal funding
 - ◊ Increased understanding of institutional roles and responsibilities
 - ◊ Granting more authority to president where appropriate
 - ◊ Increased meeting efficiency with restructured agenda and consent processes
- Increased understanding of accreditation processes

Goal 4: Support student leadership programming

- 52 students initiated into the National Technical Honor Society
 - ◊ Maintained 3.2 grade point average or better
 - ◊ Performed 25 hours or more of community service
- 3 students elected to state or national office in student organizations
- NTC students won 20 first place medals or other honors at national competitions



NEBRASKA INDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Revitalized Languages

“Severe language and cultural endangerment was what drove this project. The challenge of the project design lay with two very unique circumstances. The Omaha and Santee Tribes were not closely related, so the cultures and histories of the Nations varied greatly. Furthermore, the social and physical environments, resources, and frameworks were divergent for the two tribes. The project design sought to be responsive to two unique communities with similar overriding concerns.”

- Don Torgerson, Academic Dean

NEBRASKA INDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

South Sioux City, Nebraska

\$400,000

Academic Programs

Identified Need

Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC or the College) serves two cultural communities, the Omaha Tribe and the Santee Sioux (Dakota) Nation, on two campuses. The languages, cultures, and histories of both Nations are in danger of being lost. There are fewer than 50 fluent speakers of the *Umonhon* (Omaha) language and fewer than 10 fluent speakers and writers of Dakota in the Santee Sioux Nation. Tribal Elders and academic program staff fear that if the languages became extinct, the associated histories and cultures will disappear. The College wanted to do a better job of fulfilling its mission by preserving the Indigenous languages of the peoples that they serve.

Project Design

The College proposed to create two Centers of Excellence, the Omaha Center and the Dakota Center, to build on previous efforts to strengthen and expand their Native Studies offerings. Each program would hire a director and an adjunct language instructor. Both center directors



NICC students celebrate graduation

planned extensive outreach to develop partnerships with their respective communities for language preservation. The directors would collaborate with chartering tribes and educational partners to develop language curricula, teaching methodologies, and teacher certifications for their Indigenous languages.

The College developed a plan to create elder advisory boards to ensure cultural and linguistic accuracy and guide program development. Each center proposed to engage tribal citizens in program evaluation through community gatherings that encouraged language use. The community gatherings would allow directors to identify elders as subjects for digital language recordings, and as informants for curriculum content. The College wanted to preserve and revitalize the languages and traditional ways of knowing and living, succeed in producing Native language speakers, and create a coordinated approach between the two campuses to making the core academic curriculum culturally relevant.

Intellectual Capital Gained

NICC found its intellectual capital residing in “the languages, histories, and the cultures of the Omaha Tribe and the Santee Sioux Nation.” Ancestors’ wisdom provided the seed, roots, and stock for the continuation of their language and life ways.

NICC became a leader in Indigenous language preservation and education among tribal and mainstream institutions of higher learning and within their communities. NICC joined Cankdeska Cikana College and Sisseton Wahpeton College in the Dakota Alliance. The Dakota Center of Excellence worked together with the other colleges to develop Dakota language curricula and new courses. The shared work connected the Santee program staff to academics at three other tribal colleges, two mainstream universities, eight other Dakota-speaking communities in the U.S., and six Dakota reserves in Canada. The exposure drew positive attention to NICC’s educational programs and language resources. The College received requests for information about their model and materials from Dartmouth College and Yale University.

The two Centers of Excellence developed highly effective models for preserving and perpetuating Indigenous languages based on family and community education. NICC strengthened relationships with its chartering tribal councils and other related tribes. The Santee tribal council offered a grant to fund the language instructor for two years. The Omaha tribe officially endorsed its language programs, opening the way for language partnerships with public schools and in detention centers. Two Head Start centers now teach Omaha or Dakota languages.

Community education events promoted language revitalization, provided conversational and language immersion opportunities, and allowed for community feedback and investment in the project. Enthusiastic tribal citizens and elders volunteered at Dakota youth camps, playing traditional games and telling stories. The Dakota center connected with the Santee community by publishing and distributing a bi-weekly newspaper, and a Dakota language calendar with a companion instructional CD to infuse more language in the daily lives of families. The two centers opened their cultural field trips and language immersion events to the public at no charge, and local people gained a deeper understanding of their past, present, and future. The NICC academic dean reported that prior to the grant, “the College was seen as *outside* the community. This grant allowed us to integrate *with* the community.”

Student participation in language, culture, and history classes promoted leadership and family well-being. Intergenerational bonds grew stronger as students reached out to their own family elders to learn about tribal histories, languages, and cultures. Instructors reminded Dakota language students that their language is spiritual as well as academic. This moved students to abstain from alcohol and other drugs; they found that their commitment to study the language helped them fulfill this pledge. Whole families followed suit. The Dakota center reported that four language students led their extended families toward sobriety and renewed spiritual practice and two more families have started on similar journeys. The Omaha language program reports similar effects; they offered language courses at the tribe’s residential treatment center, and 14 of 20 students remained in the course and maintained sobriety.



Students in the new language lab at the Omaha campus

Students who were learning to speak the language in their college courses became community leaders as they entered extended families to share the language and support learning in natural settings. Language students became visible resources and leaders in both communities. They performed service work such as translation of signs, teaching classes, and producing graphic arts for a language calendar. Students led community gatherings and performed spiritual ceremonies in their original languages, which renewed the hope and faith of their elders. One Omaha student led a traditional buffalo hunt for community members, and a Santee student developed a domestic violence program. Language students gained self-esteem and a greater purpose as community leaders.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

In the beginning, the two campuses operated their projects independently. The approach provided autonomy for each campus, but created a lack of accountability. Late reports and under-spent budgets became a chronic concern. The involvement of financial staff and the potential loss of some award funds highlighted the need for better coordination and transparency.

The project helped NICC solidify their understanding that some elements of a shared program must remain flexible in order to respond to each tribe's unique needs. At the same time, the project's expectation that the two centers communicate with each other about outcomes and to share lessons created a new framework for stronger collaborative relationships and transparency in planning and executing programs between the two campuses.



Alice Saunsoci, Omaha Center of Excellence Director

Models and Sustainability

The College believes that the knowledge of the elders was an essential ingredient in ensuring the language and culture programs serve their constituents appropriately. Their model can serve as a pattern for other colleges that wish to engage elders in language preservation efforts. NICC found that it was important to honor elders by paying them as consultants. This demonstrated respect for their expertise, and elders served in culturally appropriate roles as teachers and advisors.

NICC effectively engaged elders, and this helped increase community connections, credibility, and resources. The presence of elders as cultural advisors signaled that the project could be trusted. Elders actively participated in language immersion camps, community dinners, political debates, and video documentation of the language. The first Santee gatherings engaged 69 elders, and sadly, only 19 are still living. This shows the urgency and importance of NICC's work to preserve elder wisdom. They shared stories with the community, and identified traditional foods and locations on reservation. Both Dakota and Omaha elders assisted NICC in producing two cultural sensitivity trainings for all community service providers in the urban and rural areas served by the College. Elders helped their communities become more aware of the vital work done at NICC to restore their languages and life ways.

The project success is sustainable because language revitalization became a priority for all stakeholders. The College has integrated language and culture into all aspects of campus life. Digital materials preserved for future learners the actual sound and image of Native speakers using the language. Common resources used at four tribal colleges for Dakota language instruction support

standardized coursework and enable ongoing collaborative research. The engagement of families, agencies, public schools, and tribal governments ensures the perpetuation of language and culture as the use of the language increases over time.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Wyatt Thomas, director of the Dakota Center of Excellence, reports on the importance of elder participation in their project: “Due to the loss of some elders, I had to adapt and change protocols in this area. Instead of having meetings, I went to each individual’s home and talked to him or her. I took them around the reservation and they showed me many sacred sites. They wanted to show them in case they would have to leave this land soon and go home (die). They taught me the Dakota words for each site and explained why they had respect for these sites.”

Elders helped to identify 28 sacred sites on the Santee Sioux reservation. Without this project, this information would likely have been lost to future generations.

"Culture Sensitivity From An Indigenous Perspective"

June 29th and 30th
 Registration Begins @ 8 a.m.

Stoney Creek Inn
 300 3rd St.
 Sioux City, Ia

Presenters
 Gene Thin Elk
 Rick Thomas
 Phillip (Skip) Longie

Poster for cultural sensitivity training

Project Goals and Results

Goal: Preserve and promote Dakota and Omaha languages and cultures

- 2 Centers of Excellence developed
 - ◇ 5 new Native Studies teaching positions created
 - ◇ 1 associate's degree approved (Contemporary Tribal Leadership)
 - ◇ 1 associate's degree restructured (Environmental and Natural Resources)
- 2 new language instruction certificate programs developed and offered
 - ◇ 1 Dakota certified language instructor hired at NICC
 - ◇ 3 Omaha language instructors certified; one hired at NICC
- 12 new Native Studies courses approved and offered
 - ◇ Dakota and Omaha immersion language curricula developed and implemented
 - ◇ 7 Dakota students completed language immersion courses
 - ◇ 240 digital recordings preserved elder knowledge for future classroom use
 - ◇ 12 new lesson modules developed covering history, traditional foods, language, and culturally significant geography
 - ◇ Omaha developed new textbook on verb use
- Increased community engagement with language preservation
 - ◇ 32 family and community immersion activities sponsored
 - ◇ 4 immersion camps held
 - ◇ 72 individuals served in home-based language immersion classes
 - ◇ 12 cultural field trips conducted
- 57% increased enrollment in Native American Studies overall between Fall 2006 and Fall 2011
- 5% increase in graduation rate



NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Improving Teaching and Learning

“NWIC’s Woksape Oyate project served as a catalyst for our focus on student success through an improved teaching and learning environment . . . the focus on cultural education and knowledge, pedagogy, and increasing the Native voice at the College, all helped clarify, strengthen and enhance our tribal mission. Our students as evidenced by increased retention, higher student satisfaction and more rigorous academic opportunities are the greatest beneficiaries.”

- Carol J. Rave, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services

NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE

Bellingham, Washington

\$400,000

Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Northwest Indian College (NWIC or the College) has a main campus and several extension sites that host a student body from over 90 Indian Nations. The majority of faculty members were unable to engage students effectively because they did not understand the experiences and histories of their diverse students. Many of the Native faculty members were teaching as adjunct instructors at extension sites, and felt disconnected from the main faculty and governance structures. The College had not developed formal structures to provide professional development for its instructors working away from the main campus.

The College found itself challenged with student retention and graduation. The president and leadership team wanted to transform the College’s academic culture to reflect high expectations and a deep understanding of the students it served. To accomplish this and to elevate leadership among its Native faculty, NWIC would need to increase their role in institutional development. The College, as a whole would need to continue to enhance its capacity for student engagement and effective instruction to motivate academic success.

Project Design

The *Woksape Oyate* project coincided with other efforts already underway to strengthen institutional assessment and improvement. NWIC designed a multi-faceted program to improve student success. To begin, the College would form a new faculty committee to guide teaching and learning. NWIC

would provide professional development to increase faculty understanding of the distinctive histories and contemporary lives of their students. Annual pre-service retreats would bring together adjunct and full-time faculty from the main campus and extension sites. The project would provide small grants for classroom research to encourage discovery of best practice strategies with Native learners. The College wanted to develop a new generation of Native leaders and scholars by providing mentoring and opportunities for research and leadership. NWIC envisioned the project as a research initiative that would disseminate results.

Intellectual Capital Gained



Role reversal: Lucas Washington, emerging Native leader with Willie Jones, Sr. - Lucas teaches Lummi language and Willie enrolled as a student in the course

NWIC came to describe its intellectual capital as the “ability to revitalize and support tribal knowledge, while translating the traditional knowledge of Indigenous people into a contemporary setting.”

Co-founder of the College, Willie Jones, Sr., likened intellectual capital to canoeing, which is an important activity for the Coast Salish people. Mr. Jones said, “You can teach them to pull canoe or you can teach them to *want* to pull canoe.” Pulling together is challenging and fun. It requires teamwork, practice, individual fitness, and readiness to give all for the best outcomes.

Motivating students to *want* to be and do their best became the common driver for building intellectual capital at NWIC.

Every member of the College community had a meaningful role in “pulling canoe” to change the academic environment. The high level of participation ensured sustainable change toward a culture of academic excellence. *Woksape Oyate* funding provided for training on shared governance, and President Cheryl Crazy Bull demonstrated participatory leadership as she engaged the entire campus community and instilled the singular focus of improving student success. She held focus groups regularly to solicit input and assess the impact of new ways of working. Faculty engagement increased as the College revitalized its committee structure and empowered each committee to review and update its goals and responsibilities. New faculty “inquiry groups” formed to strengthen academic rigor. The groups designed and implemented a common logic model, work plan, and assessment rubric and each department revised learning outcomes. The College strengthened grading standards, and faculty performance tools incorporated new measures of instructional and cultural competence. Students raised expectations of themselves and their teachers, and advocated for appropriate learning experiences. The board of trustees also revised their strategic goals to emphasize student success.

Institutional data gathered from faculty reviews, peer evaluations, semi-annual surveys, and course evaluations showed improved instruction and cultural sensitivity. Results from a national survey reported increased student engagement, and by the project’s conclusion, NWIC showed increased retention, graduation, and enrollment.

Faculty research uncovered best practices, and shared professional development increased student success. The College established its Coast Salish Institute in 2004 as a research and resource center for developing culturally appropriate curricula. Under the *Woksape Oyate* project, the institute staff emerged to take their rightful place as leaders in NWIC’s teaching and learning initiative. The staff engaged community elders, who shared information about traditional teaching methods and life ways. This information helped faculty to frame a new teaching and learning philosophy that would better fit the local students. Professional development activities increased awareness about the everyday and historical experience that affected student learning, such as poverty and the lingering effects of historical trauma. Full-time faculty members learned about program assessment, completed program reviews, and revised courses to incorporate culturally relevant content and learning experiences.



NWIC faculty designed this image to reflect interactive elements in the educational journey

NWIC's collaborative approach resulted in excitement and momentum for discovering and sharing best instructional strategies with Native adult learners. Faculty discovered that service learning, online student engagement, addressing unique learning styles, reflective writing, and critical thinking exercises were effective instructional strategies for their populations. The faculty published findings on their teaching and learning website, and published research papers. The methodology for academic research implemented at NWIC conforms to standard frameworks, making NWIC's protocol useful for any mainstream or tribal institution of higher learning. The *Woksape Oyate* teaching and learning initiative established an enduring research protocol that will guide future work.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Institutional-level changes take time and hard work. The College needed to develop cultural standards and infuse culture into classrooms, but the local tribe felt guarded about sharing traditional knowledge, and the faculty was uninformed about historical and contemporary tribal experience. The situation required a sensitive and balanced approach to help faculty learn in a safe way and not offend their Native constituents.

The president provided frequent opportunities for small group discussions about the changes, which provided non-threatening environments for faculty and students to share their reactions to the institutional changes. The discussions encouraged continuous assessment and allowed the project team to address concerns immediately. In this way, trust grew naturally over time among all participants and the project met its goals for increasing faculty confidence, respecting student and community experience, and developing culturally appropriate content for the curriculum.

Models and Sustainability

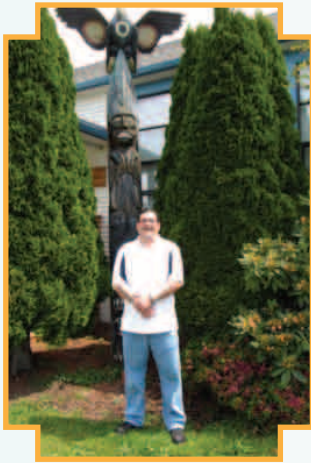
NWIC developed an effective model for increasing the power of the Native voice at the College and growing future leaders. The executive team selected several younger tribal members to develop as a cohort. At the beginning, seven worked in non-teaching positions, and two were current students in the baccalaureate degree program. The Coast Salish Institute faculty mentored the cohort and asked tribal elders to teach the group about traditional leadership theories. The cohort researched Western theories as well, and each created a personal leadership theory that combined both styles. With the knowledge they gained, the cohort designed a leadership curriculum that became the foundation for a new four-year Native Leadership degree. Group members presented their work at NWIC's annual Teaching and Learning Institutes, at a Native Studies conference, and at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit on Intellectual Capital.



Two of the emergent Native leaders presented their model at the *Woksape Oyate* Summit

The emergent leaders participated in many other campus activities. They served on committees, participated in budgeting processes, reviewed courses, and helped prepare the College's self-study for accreditation. To date, the College promoted eight from the cohort to new levels of responsibility. Four became teaching assistants, and four are full-time faculty in the Native Studies program. These young scholars have made an investment in the institution and its future growth, and have the skills and experience to lead the College forward. NWIC instituted a teaching and learning plan for the next five years that sustains and builds upon the *Woksape Oyate* project, including continued funding for emergent Native leaders.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Don McCluskey, Sr. (his traditional Lummi name is *Lha-Qwom-Kanim*) earned an associate's at NWIC, and a bachelor's degree at Western Washington University. He returned to work at the College, and the team selected him for the emergent Native leader cohort. Don now teaches full-time in English and Native Studies. During his cohort experience, he served on the Teaching and Learning Committee and chaired the faculty roundtable (faculty governance body). The students selected him as the Faculty of the Year. Project lead Carole J. Rave noted, "Don has emerged as an individual who is able to influence others in their instructional practices and as a leader in the organizational growth of the College." Don fulfilled his life mission by promoting education among his people. He said, "I eagerly look forward to the continued opportunity to contribute to my community in a positive way. The leadership role I hold and the example I set within the Lummi community only serves to

model the level of achievement and understanding that we all, as Native people, are capable of attaining.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase instructional effectiveness with Native students

- Faculty governance structure revised
 - ◇ Teaching and Learning Committee guided professional development program
 - ◇ Traditional elders helped inform new NWIC teaching and learning philosophy
- Common professional development programs held for full-time and adjunct faculty from main campus and five extension sites
 - ◇ 2 summer teaching and learning institutes
 - ◇ Program assessment trainings
 - ◇ Best practices with diverse learners trainings
 - ◇ Cultural competence trainings
- Faculty action research conducted
 - ◇ 13 projects identified best instructional practices
 - ◇ 3 new websites disseminated research findings and instructional resources
- Institutional and national survey data showed improved teaching and learning
 - ◇ Student data showed increased satisfaction and success

Goal 2: Increase leadership and scholarship of Native faculty and staff

- 9 emergent leaders selected for mentoring cohort
 - ◇ Staff supported cohort in curriculum development, program reviews, and accreditation studies
 - ◇ Emergent leaders served on committees, conducted research, and presented at conferences
 - ◇ Cohort designed leadership curriculum for new degree program
- 8 emergent leaders received promotions
 - ◇ 4 teach full time
- New five-year plan includes resources for continuing emergent leaders program

Goal 3: Increase student enrollment, retention, and graduation

- Between 2007 and 2010, first year student retention improved by
 - ◇ 20.1% in English courses
 - ◇ 2.2% in math courses
 - ◇ 11% in human development courses
- Between 2007 and 2011
 - ◇ 33% increase in graduation
 - ◇ 35% increased enrollment



OG LALA LAKOTA
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

OG LALA LAKOTA COLLEGE

Kyle, South Dakota

\$700,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development

Identified Need

Oglala Lakota College (OLC or the College) serves the higher education needs of the Oglala Sioux Nation (OSN). In 2005, the College assumed control of the local Head Start program and learned that none of these preschool programs routinely incorporated Lakota language learning. A study in 2007 showed that the use of Lakota was decreasing by generations, identifying 58 percent of tribal members ages 50 and over, 9 percent of citizens ages 18 to 29, and 3 percent of tribal children younger than 17 years of age as speakers. Tribal schools reported that despite offering Lakota courses, none of their elementary, middle, or high schools had produced Lakota speakers. The council of elders at the College directed OLC President Thomas Shortbull to make effective Lakota language education an emergency priority. President Shortbull examined research that linked social ills to the loss of Native language and culture, and other research that related bilingual education with academic success. The College set up the Lakota Language Institute. It challenged the Lakota Studies department to revise its approach to language education and strengthen OLC's capacity to produce graduates who could help reverse the disappearance of the Lakota language.

Project Design

The College proposed to use *Woksape Oyate* project funds to develop further the Lakota Language Institute. The institute would lead language revitalization efforts, develop language curricula, and perform research on new practice methods for Lakota language instruction. Under the project, the College



Keeping Lakota Alive

“Woksape Oyate transformed Oglala Lakota College’s language program. OLC designed and tested effective immersion curricula and methods to support language revitalization beginning with its youngest learners, and built a new demonstration school where it can train future teachers. The *Lakota Tokeya Wounspe* or Lakota First Academy keeps the language and unique perspective of the Lakota people alive and growing.”

- Thomas Shortbull, President

would upgrade their teacher education requirements, enhance certification standards, and devise and test effective immersion methods and curricula for preschool through college-level language instruction. The College planned to hire certified language teachers for one community Head Start program where it would pilot the new curriculum.

The project would devise means to encourage multigenerational language proficiency across the OSN. OLC proposed free courses and proficiency-based incentives for its employees and community

members to promote adult engagement in the language revitalization project. The College named the project “*Taniyohila Lakota Woyakakta*” (TLW), which means “Everyone Will Speak Lakota.”

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College embraced a definition of intellectual capital that combined its human and structural capital to develop successful language education programs. The College believed that armed with effective language revitalization programming, its staff, students, and faculty had the capacity to reverse the effects of historical trauma among the Lakota people.



The College advanced its capacity for Indigenous language revitalization and teacher preparation programs.

OLC expanded its ability to build programs and create curricular resources. In the first two years of the grant, the College refined its Lakota Studies and Lakota Education programs, curriculum development, and teacher certification standards. OLC reviewed graduate and undergraduate programs, added new upper division coursework, opened new faculty positions, and increased language requirements for all Lakota Studies majors. The College added a new curriculum development course to its education program, and certified teachers worked together with Lakota

students to develop a hybrid model for language acquisition. The new model combined traditional ways of learning with practical strategies from modern methods. The new curriculum is entitled *Lakota Woglaka Wounspe* (LWW) or “Lakota First,” and provides for instruction of three grades (K, 1, 2) in three subject areas (English, math, and Lakota). For each area, OLC prepared and published high-level standards and protocols, instructional modules, teacher manuals, and performance-based assessment rubrics. Future teachers who worked on the new curriculum, increased their investment in language revitalization, and the development process provided them with hands-on experience in program building and cultural integration.

OLC embedded the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) as an assessment of fluency for all Lakota Studies and Lakota education majors, ensuring teacher competence upon graduation. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages certified six faculty members to administer the OPI in the Lakota language. OLC became the first institution of higher learning to translate this measure for use with a Native American language.

OLC language program successes supported new funding for a K-3 language demonstration school. Head Start pre-school teachers piloted the LWW curriculum, and the College fully implemented the program in a new kindergarten at the Head Start site. The OSN Head Start program directed all its early childhood teachers to incorporate Lakota language in their classrooms. Subsequently, OSN public schools adopted the new instructional model in five communities.

In years three through five, the College successfully leveraged \$3.4 million in federal grants to begin construction on a new Lakota language demonstration school, which it named *Lakota Tokeya Wounspe*. The school opened with two classrooms, indoor gym, outdoor activity area, and kitchen in 2009. OLC obtained a second grant for nearly \$700,000 to add two more classrooms and a cafeteria in 2012. The State of South Dakota Department of Education accredited LWW for K-8 education. The project allowed OLC to implement its well-developed and tested curriculum. The College hired



OLC's new Lakota demonstration school in its construction phase

five new staff, including a master's level coordinator with 38 years of experience in education. The *Woksape Oyate* grant helped launch the school by funding initial salaries for two certified teachers who are fluent Lakota speakers.

The school expands the capacity of the College's teacher preparation programs by offering onsite practicum and observation opportunities for education majors. Partnerships with the state department of education, the tribal Nation, local public school districts, and federally regulated Head Start programs provide broad-based settings for language engagement in the immediate and long term. Practice research and the development of an immersion school for elementary students established OLC as a leader in Lakota language education and revitalization.

The school expands the

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College found that it had created overambitious goals. It wanted to develop and staff a language institute but had difficulty hiring project personnel initially; therefore, it could not establish a structure and agenda for research and development. Fortunately, the College fell back on its capable academic teams to lead the language project. This located the project appropriately within the academic program structure while harnessing the intellectual capital of those directly involved in implementing programs.

The original project also proposed to engage learners across the life cycle. The College implemented new immersion courses with competency-based incentives for its staff, and offered these tuition-free for adults in the community as well. Five staff completed the course and three achieved intermediate level proficiency. OLC encountered unanticipated resistance among adult community members due to unresolved historical trauma. With the Fund's approval, the College's leadership team redirected efforts toward their youngest learners and their families, where success was more probable. The College continues to offer opportunities for adults who want to learn and maintains hope that interest within this group will grow over time, especially as the young ones begin exhibiting their language skills.

Models and Sustainability

The LWW will serve as a model for language immersion for other tribal colleges wanting to preserve their languages. The model shows promise because the College treated the Lakota language as a serious academic discipline. OLC's experience shows that although it may be difficult to engage adult learners, there is hope in beginning in small settings with young children. As more teachers receive training in the model, schools across Lakota speaking nations will increasingly adopt a more effective approach.

The successes under the *Woksape Oyate* grant increases OLC's credibility, as it fulfills its mission. The College will continue to pursue its dream to implement fully a Lakota Language Institute to research effective language immersion approaches for all ages. Under the grant, OLC acquired additional curricular materials and resources. Its initial test of the new immersion protocol showed positive results. Longitudinal Studies can enrich the field of linguistics and mainstream academic

efforts to produce second language speakers. In 2012, the College’s board approved a new five-year mission and strategic plan that strengthens its commitment to language revitalization for learners across the life cycle and assures the continued growth of programs.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Darlene Last Horse was raised in a strictly Lakota cultural environment. Darlene remembers receiving punishment for speaking Lakota at school. The difficult experience at school did not take her identity as a Lakota person away nor her love for education. She learned English, and became bilingual. Darlene started college in the 1980’s, and eventually returned to OLC to complete a bachelor’s degree in Lakota Studies with a language teaching certificate. She worked at a local school for several years, teaching Lakota in elementary through high school. Darlene worked at Head Start in the immersion class as the teacher-aide, and when *Lakota Tokeya Wounspe* opened, OLC hired Darlene to teach Lakota. President Tom Shortbull says, “Darlene is a very

precious asset. She has a lot to share with the young children, be it about her rearing in the traditional way, about the local history, or about being a Lakota girl or a Lakota boy in the 21st Century. As a Lakota woman, Darlene is dedicated to passing on the language and the culture to the next generation.”



Lakota vocabulary used in first grade classroom

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Strengthen Lakota Studies and Education degree programs

- Reviewed and revised Lakota Studies and K-12 Education baccalaureate programs
 - ◊ Created 4 new upper-level courses
 - ◊ Increased credit requirements for Lakota language study in all degree programs
 - ◊ Developed immersion curricula and instructional program for K-3
- Upgraded criteria and standardized language proficiency assessment
 - ◊ Trained and certified 6 staff as Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) examiners
 - ◊ 66% of Lakota Studies faculty rated superior in language competency
 - ◊ 72% of majors fluent at intermediate level or above for all years tested

Goal 2: Increase number of Lakota language teachers for all levels

- 71% increased enrollment in all Lakota Studies programs from 2006-2011
 - ◊ 66% increased enrollment in K-12 Lakota education majors
- 20 Lakota Studies bachelor's degree graduates are teaching in Lakota schools or programs
 - ◊ 3 obtained master's degrees
- 16 new Lakota language instructors certified
 - ◊ 7 OLC certified teachers were hired for immersion and Head Start programs

Goal 3: Increase Lakota language proficiency and use at the College and in the Nation

- Designed Lakota First (*Lakota Woglaka Wounspe* or LWW) curriculum and standards
- Head Start program adopted LWW curriculum
 - ◊ 96% of Head Start classrooms incorporated Lakota language instruction
- Built and opened new K-3 language immersion demonstration school at OLC in 2009
 - ◊ Enrollment doubled from Fall 2010 to Fall 2012
- Disseminated LWW curriculum to all high school teachers
 - ◊ Trained K-12 schools in OPI and adopted as standard fluency exam
- 5 OLC employees and 17 students completed new 12-hour immersion course



SAGINAW CHIPPEWA
TRIBAL COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Empowered to Revitalize Tribal Language

“ The project has impacted our college profusely. Being able to offer Ojibwa (Anishinaabek) language courses as well as language support has empowered our college, its staff, students and community, and in so doing, has secured a place for us as language ‘revitalizers’ in a global society. ”

- Sharon Cole, Language Intern and Research Assistant

SAGINAW CHIPPEWA TRIBAL COLLEGE

Mount Pleasant, Michigan

\$250,000

Academic Programs

Identified Need

A 2005 survey found that only five fluent Ojibwa language speakers remained in the communities served by Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (SCTC or the College). The College had offered Ojibwa language courses, but these were inconsistent, and it had no full-time Ojibwa instructor. The Saginaw Chippewa Tribe also offered some language programs, but there was a lack of systematic coordination with the College for producing fluent speakers. The College identified revitalization of the Ojibwa language and cultural wisdom as an urgent priority.

SCTC needed to review its Native American Studies (NAS) degree program and develop a stronger language component to improve its effectiveness in teaching Ojibwa. The College wanted a more comprehensive cultural foundation for all its programs as well. With a more effective language program, SCTC could solidify its role as a resource for language revitalization in its communities.

Project Design

The grant would allow the College to hire a certified Ojibwa language instructor to develop the language program and guide the creation of a new curriculum. Faculty would undertake a program review for its NAS department and would revise the entire academic program to integrate Ojibwa knowledge frameworks across the curriculum. The College would require

every faculty member to take beginning-level Ojibwa language to maximize student experience in the classroom. They would pilot a summer immersion program for all ages **Woksape Oyate** grant funds would allow SCTC to open a new language and research intern position that would support faculty with the new content, devise new resources, and promote language use across campus.

Intellectual Capital Gained

SCTC found intellectual capital residing in its staff, students, and community members as life-long learners who think critically, appreciate diversity, and value the unique culture of the Ojibwa people. The project helped the College rediscover the resources innate to its people and unearth the good in its language and culture.

Language revitalization served as the catalyst to strengthen the academic program, improve institutional credibility, and increase enrollment. The *Woksape Oyate* grant helped the College develop new program review practices and to strengthen the rigor of the NAS program. The language instructor developed an instructional philosophy, method, and comprehensive course materials. He led the efforts to review and revise the course curriculum and engaged the entire faculty in program revision and cultural inclusion, drawing on their various talents in curriculum development, culture and language, and institutional assessment. Subsequently, the administration increased the language requirement for the NAS degree program and updated its technology to support language learning. The College now offers an integrated sequence across three levels of proficiency and a language lab furnished with computerized learning programs and language resources.

The Curriculum Committee used this model and created a new master academic plan that aligned all program outcomes with institutional assessments. Student evaluations confirmed that language classes provided challenging coursework and the College improved its reputation as an institution of higher learning. Overall enrollment increased by 49 percent during the grant, and graduation rates increased by seven percent between the 2007 and 2010 academic years. SCTC language credits now transfer to Central Michigan University, which helps graduates transition to four-year degree programs.

SCTC improved its working relationship with local schools. High school students now earn college and high school credits concurrently through dual enrollment in language courses at the College. They added a new dual enrollment Ojibwa appreciation course that is open to community members and high school students.

SCTC strengthened its position with the tribe as a key player and a valuable resource in language restoration. Their project moved the College from a marginal and ineffectual position to a full partner in language restoration with other community efforts. The new Ojibwa language instructor became a key player in the College's efforts to strengthen community partnerships. He helped K-12 schools and the tribe's *Ziibiwing* Cultural Center to design new language curricula, and the College produced language kits and other resources for the tribal language camps. The language instructor represented, along with College administrators, SCTC on the Ojibwa Language Revitalization Committee.

SCTC increased its visibility as a provider of language education by sponsoring community language events. Immersion activities took place throughout the grant period and the College co-sponsored language events with the tribe: Ojibwa luncheons, "*Baakinaage*" (community bingo), and they brought an Ojibwa educator and author to speak on campus. Language classes at the College provided a training resource for tribal employees. The tribe's toddler immersion program now employs two SCTC Ojibwa language graduates. Two tribal social services employees enrolled in language programs, increasing job satisfaction and their capacity to serve elders who speak Ojibwa.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

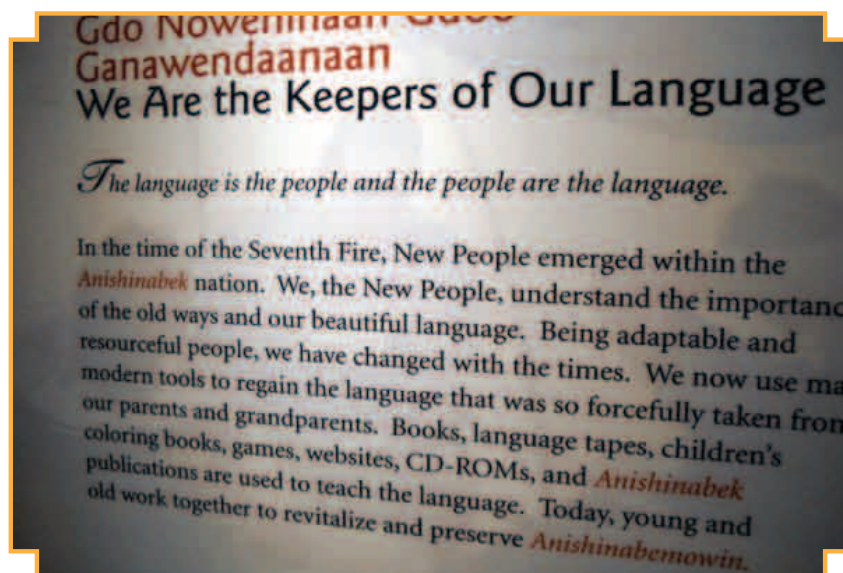
SCTC had difficulty with its project staffing and budget management. The College experienced reporting challenges due to a mismatch between its fiscal year and the Fund's project calendar. A delay in the submission of a fundable proposal impeded the College's ability to hire the project's key staff member, an Ojibwa language instructor. Once hired, it was clear that the scope of work exceeded the capacity of a single person.

The Fund allowed several program and budget adjustments, and funded a student research assistant, which freed the language instructor to work on program and curriculum development. The intern completed stalled tasks, conducted project evaluation activities, and created new language materials. The intern provided a student perspective for evaluating new methods and curricula, and the language instructor mentored a student leader for a future faculty role. The College was so pleased with the work of the intern that it adopted this way of working for other projects.

Models and Sustainability

The College developed an effective program that strengthened its capacity to teach Ojibwa language and fulfill its mission. The instructor combined several instructional methods that have proven results, and the project effectively engaged the entire faculty in program revision and cultural inclusion. The participatory process was so successful that the faculty proposed their own professional development in the language. The College adopted a requirement that all faculty members take a course in beginning Ojibwa, which promoted positive interactions with students and created a genuine learning community among colleagues.

Students engaged in transforming the cultural essence of the campus environment. They translated campus signs, started their own “language learning corner” for informal practice and established a forum conducted entirely in the Ojibwa language. Students designed a new sign encouraging the staff to use Ojibwa. It read, “*Anishnaabemtooshin*,” which translates in English to “speak Ojibwa to me.” The College institutionalized the expectation for language use throughout campus. Increased enrollment in language classes created revenue for perpetuating the language program. Community and tribal partnerships developed for language revitalization sustain the gains and position the College to develop future language programs.



A sign from the Ziibiwing Cultural Center celebrates the language

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Russell Menefee is a second year student working towards an associate’s degree in Native American Studies. He is a member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and came to the tribal college because of its offerings in Ojibwa language. When Russell decided to go back to college, he asked his brother for advice about his future role in the tribe. His brother offered, “I see you as a guidance counselor. You have many stories to tell and have had many obstacles in your past. You can relate to just about anyone having trouble in life. Also, you have no trouble talking to anyone and you are a very open person.” His brother’s recommendation stuck with Russell for years. “Living near the tribe and seeing so many young students going through the language immersion program, I decided I would like to talk to them in their language. It motivates me to be able to talk to these children and to relate my life to theirs in whichever language best suits them.”

The staff at the College helped him to connect with others and encouraged him to obtain the skills to realize his dreams. “It makes me work that much harder because I realize that I *can* reach my dreams. I cannot wait to see what my children will learn from these wonderful people here at the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College.” The College selected Russell to present the language model at the **Woksape Oyate Summit on Intellectual Capital** in Denver in October 2011.



Carla Sineway, academic dean and interim president, explains the improved SCTC language program to *Woksape Oyate* meeting participants in Denver



Students in the language resource center

Project Goals and Results

Goal: Strengthen the Native American Studies program through the development of a strong, comprehensive Ojibwa language program

- Replaced an adjunct position with a permanent full-time language instructor
- Faculty completed NAS and Liberal Arts program reviews
 - ◊ Added Ojibwa 101 requirement to both programs
- Increased Ojibwa language offerings
 - ◊ Offered Ojibwa I, II, and III
 - ◊ Piloted a new language immersion course and 9 students passed the course
- New policy requires all faculty and administrators to take Ojibwa I
 - ◊ 5 faculty and administrators completed level I
 - ◊ 1 faculty registered for level II
- Created new Ojibwa language materials
 - ◊ Transcribed and transferred for classroom use an older recording of an Ojibwa-speaking elder
 - ◊ Created immersion curriculum and materials for language camp
- 76% increase in language class enrollment from 2007-2011
 - ◊ 32% increased vocabulary in Ojibwa 101 by pretest and midterm comparison
 - ◊ GPA increased for language courses from 2.0 to 3.9



SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Beyond Degrees: Mentoring for Faculty Development

“Well-educated faculty and staff are critical to achievement of the mission of Salish Kootenai College. Through the *Woksape Oyate* project, SKC increased the number of faculty and staff with the educational level and expertise required to provide campus leadership.”

- Stacey Sherwin, PhD, RN,
Director of the Office
of Institutional Effectiveness

SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE

Pablo, Montana

\$400,000; Supplemental \$100,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Salish Kootenai College (SKC or the College) had evolved to offer stronger academic programs but struggled to attract and retain qualified faculty and staff. Other colleges and universities offered better salaries and opportunities for professional development. Many of its employees lacked advanced degrees required for teaching positions. Non-Native faculty members held a majority of degrees above the baccalaureate level, and just 32 percent of full-time faculty members were Native. The College needed to increase credentials for Native staff in order to promote leadership and meet its mission as a tribal institution of higher learning.

Project Design

SKC proposed professional development for Native employees and key staff members. The program would offer scholarships to 12 Native employees for advanced degrees at nearby University of Montana. The College also requested a modest amount to help student services professionals update knowledge and skills that would improve student retention.

SKC received a supplemental award in year three for a mentoring component to support degree completion and help staff transition to new teaching positions. The supplemental award also funded a symposium in the last project year for regional tribal colleges to explore and share best practices for teaching and learning.

Intellectual Capital Gained

SKC recognized that its intellectual capital resided in its employees and their capacity to offer an excellent education for the unique learners served by the College. By increasing the educational levels of its employees, SKC expected to increase its effectiveness in helping its students to lead more full and successful lives.

Employee advanced degrees increased institutional capacity, credibility, and individual employee confidence. Advanced degrees obtained by SKC staff increased the credibility of academic programs and the institution as a whole. For the first time, the College’s education department chair had credentials equivalent to counterparts within the state. Higher faculty

credentials in the education, nursing, and social work programs helped SKC meet accreditation standards to maintain baccalaureate standing.

Participants gained professional expertise that allowed them to contribute to institutional success. Faculty members that obtained master's degrees led institutional assessment efforts. Two student services staff members acquired the necessary credentials for their positions, and then took on advanced leadership responsibilities and instructional roles. They streamlined and improved student enrollment processes. In addition, these two staff members attended professional conferences and visited other campuses, then implemented first-year success programs that increased student retention. One new graduate designed innovative technology processes and led SKC through a crisis when the building that housed their computer server flooded. He credited his advanced coursework with enabling him to design quickly a solution that minimized damage.

SKC implemented a mentoring model that changed the way it approaches faculty development. Mentoring proved an effective strategy for degree completion and advancement of program participants. The *Woksape Oyate* supplemental grant provided additional salary for a senior faculty member to guide the mentoring program. She recruited a group of faculty mentors and reached out to program participants. Experienced faculty provided practical advice and offered coaching for research and writing assignments. Faculty working on degrees reported that mentoring increased their confidence in academics, improved their ability to balance their work, school, and family roles, and decreased anxiety. The program participants that elected to work with a mentor all completed their degrees in a timely fashion. Participants who did not work with mentors found it more difficult to persist from semester to semester, although they continued with degree work at a slower pace. Surveys showed that mentors enjoyed unexpected intellectual growth and professional renewal from their mentoring experience. The College strengthened its commitment to academic advancement for its employees because of the leadership that emerged among mentoring project participants.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College hired an outside grant writer for its *Woksape Oyate* proposal who failed to engage a campus-wide discussion about intellectual capital and the purpose of the grant. The inadequate planning resulted in lower than expected employee participation and an evaluation plan that struggled to capture institutional impact. SKC found the original scholarship criteria was too limited and did not address its strategic needs for professional development. The College determined upon review that some staff needed to complete bachelor's degrees to move forward in the organization. A program change opened the applicant pool to include both Native and non-Native staff, and expanded funding for bachelor's as well as master's and doctorate degrees. The new plan allowed enrollment in a variety of programs rather than limiting participants to a single institution. SKC revised its educational leave policies to accommodate flexible schedules for employees interested in pursuing advanced degrees and subsequently, enrollment in the scholarship program increased.

SKC struggled as well with turnover in project leadership. The College was unable to hire a project director in the first year, and implementation fell to the academic dean. She could not give it proper time and attention, and delegated responsibility to an administrative assistant who lacked authority to engage faculty. When the dean retired at the end of year two, the project was set back while the position was vacant. The College hired a new dean who was distracted by many new responsibilities; then, she left the College before the end of year five. Fortunately, the senior faculty member who led the supplemental grant provided consistent support to scholarship recipients and this helped the project conclude with reasonable success. Near the end of the grant, SKC hired an employee who had benefitted from the *Woksape Oyate* project to fill the vacancy.

The College learned that it needs to be inclusive and strategic in planning for staff professional development opportunities, and it needs to provide the appropriate staffing for grant-funded projects.

Models and Sustainability

Although the main project struggled, the supplemental grant helped the College to identify and prioritize its needs for professional development. While putting together the mentoring program, a core group of faculty recognized an overall lack of support structures for its teaching and learning community. The group led discussion groups that explored how SKC could do better in engaging its current faculty and supporting new faculty hires. Work groups conducted research on faculty processes at other institutions. Their findings helped SKC to devise a new faculty handbook. Building on the success of the *Woksape Oyate* program, the group designed a new faculty orientation that includes biweekly mentoring and quarterly in-service meetings covering a one-year learning cycle.

The efforts gained momentum as faculty work groups began addressing ways to improve the instruction at the College. They implemented a website that hosts curriculum plans, effective teaching strategies, and assessment methods. One group analyzed how to integrate SKC's core values and pedagogy into online courses. A new president hired in 2010 encouraged additional venues for intellectual exchange such as the "Honor the Professor" forum where faculty shared their academic research with colleagues. The faculty transformed itself from a disenfranchised group to a cohesive cross-disciplinary unit that continues to improve teaching and learning. SKC culminated its grant and expanded its learning community by convening 13 TCUs for a New Faculty and Development Education Symposium. The colleges received the program well, and committed to collaborating to find new resources for future convening on effective teaching at tribal colleges.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Niki Graham (Salish) is the prevention programs director at the College. Niki began working at SKC in 2004. She held a bachelor of science in Health Enhancement, with a K-12 teaching endorsement from Montana State University. Niki aspired to teach health education at the College; however, she would have to obtain a master's degree. Niki received a *Woksape Oyate* scholarship and enrolled at the University of Montana in the School of Public Community and Health Science. She found that the program content and new way of learning through online courses was challenging but rewarding. "The skills and readings have helped me identify my weaknesses as well as my strengths as a leader within the program and my home community. The benefit of my degree work was in the management of programs. I have much more to learn and have greatly appreciated the chance to grow personally and professionally." Niki says that she would not have pursued a master's degree without the scholarship. The opportunity to complete an advanced degree helped her to commit to her future role at the College. Her love of teaching inspired her to continue her education and qualified her to teach at the College.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Build leadership capacity through advanced education and professional development for faculty and staff

- 13 faculty and staff members received funding to pursue advanced degrees
 - ◇ 4 degrees completed: 1 doctorate; 2 master's degrees; 1 bachelor's degree
 - ◇ 5 are near completion: 1 doctorate; 3 master's degrees; 1 bachelor's degree
 - ◇ 3 will continue degree work after program ends
 - ◇ 1 withdrew from the program and left SKC employ
- 10% increase in number of faculty with advanced degrees

Supplemental Goal: Support and retain developing new faculty

- 4 project recipients received support from senior faculty mentors and completed degrees
- Faculty developed a unified effort to improve teaching and learning
- SKC hosted a teaching and learning symposium for regional TCUs
 - ◇ 13 TCUs and 38 TCU faculty shared best practices in developmental education





SINTE GLESKA
UNIVERSITY

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Building a Nation

“The idea of ‘intellectual capital’ has led the faculty to set a higher teaching standard for themselves to better serve the students and the Sicangu Nation as a whole. They now see their impact on the community and reservation, rather than just in the classroom. Increasing prestige and confidence in the quality of the educational experience at a tribal university builds pride and confidence in our students and the community and ensures that *Lakol Wico’un* – the Lakota way of life – will continue. We are building our Nation.”

- Leona White Hat, Project Lead

SINTE GLESKA UNIVERSITY

Mission, South Dakota

\$400,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

As a rural institution, Sinte Gleska University (SGU or the University) provides educational programs that support local economic needs. SGU is a regional leader in providing academic programs from certificates through master’s degrees. New tribal initiatives and a younger student profile prompted the University to expand its offerings. It wanted to provide graduates with the skills and knowledge needed for the diversity of career interests and opportunities. The faculty needed to update their teaching and engagement strategies because students were entering with more technology experience. It was a prime opportunity for the University to increase its capacity for contemporary and evidence-based teaching and learning practices.

Project Design

The University reviewed its strategic priorities for professional development to strengthen its academic program and used its *Woksape Oyate* funding to design a Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). The CTE would serve as a hub for assessing faculty learning needs, identifying resources, designing training activities, and hosting formal and informal discussions to increase communication across departments. The project awarded small research grants for teaching and learning projects and offered collaborative training across departments to encourage shared responsibility for improving learner outcomes. To boost faculty credentials and leadership capacity, the University awarded *Woksape Oyate* scholarships for master’s, and doctoral degrees. By strengthening teaching and learning, the project hoped to improve student academic outcomes such as retention, persistence, and completion.

Above all, the University wanted professional development and training for employees to align with the founders’ vision for honoring Lakota ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The University defined intellectual capital at the beginning of the grant as its collective knowledge residing in its human capital, combined with the structural capital of its buildings, technology, and infrastructure resources. The University’s definition also included a unique feature—its “customer

capital” (students, tribe, professional, and other academic partners). “Now we define intellectual capital as intellectual competence and confidence coupled with knowledge, values, and wisdom of the People.”

The Center for Teaching Excellence transformed the academic environment by promoting shared learning, research, and cultural resource development. The CTE became a living entity that faculty relied on to inform a Lakota worldview. The center staff created a Lakota-based orientation to help new faculty understand the cultural frameworks and expectations for teaching at the University. SGU drew on the strengths of Lakota faculty to design an innovative protocol called *Tiospaye Glu Kinipi* (Bringing Life to the People). These regularly scheduled gatherings trained faculty on new instructional practices and gave them a place to share research they were conducting in advanced degree programs and other projects with colleagues. Many of the training activities included Lakota content, and surveys showed measurable improvement in the faculty’s ability to incorporate cultural concepts across the curriculum. Faculty also increased collegiality as they shared training on assessment and worked together to improve student learning. Stronger communication between academic departments resulted in new collaborative ventures that strengthened the entire academic program. The CTE expanded its collegial networks by hosting two best practice seminars for cultural integration in teaching and learning with three regional TCUs.

Faculty degree work improved the reputation of the University and strengthened the academic program. Employee professional development improved the University’s reputation for a high quality and relevant education. Over the course of the *Woksape Oyate* project, eight faculty members engaged in masters’ and doctoral work. Four completed masters’ degrees, and four are close to completion. Their achievements modeled the importance of advanced education for the community.

Faculty members sponsored for advanced degree work demonstrated increased leadership and initiative. Two project recipients worked together to develop a new master’s level leadership course and a new occupational therapy course for the Human Services program. Several faculty members participated in creating a new Lakota Studies bachelor’s degree program in art. Training in assessment and faculty degree work helped all departments to strengthen program reviews. Subsequent to training, the business and human services departments collaborated to review and revise their curriculum. The growth of faculty has helped SGU strengthen its institutional vision and capacity to provide a relevant and rigorous education for the Sicangu Lakota people (Rosebud Sioux Nation).

SGU closed the technology gap and improved student engagement and retention. The project provided learning experiences across campus that updated staff technology skills. The faculty increased their ability to engage students in the classroom, which resulted in higher student satisfaction, retention, and graduation rates. Social media innovations helped the University provide outreach and information to students in remote areas when severe weather limited campus access. Currently SGU is the only tribal institution of higher learning with an I-Tunes “U account,” which will allow faculty to create interactive texts, courses, and curriculum specific to their courses. The University produced several instructional DVDs that captured the finite traditional wisdom and core cultural values held by living wisdom-keepers. These resources are invaluable for orienting new faculty who are unfamiliar with Lakota life ways. SGU shared this wisdom across the reservation by disseminating the DVDs at no cost to educational partners, tribal agencies, and individual families. The revitalization of Lakota values potentially will strengthen cultural identity and open minds to better ways of living. Because of the strengthened academic programs and technology capacity at the University, more students are experiencing academic success. Today’s SGU graduates have up to date

skills and are better prepared to help their people as leaders in tribal government, education, and community agencies.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The project had difficulty filling a dedicated project director position. The vice-president of academics kept the project moving forward by quickly adopting a team approach. SGU established shared project leadership and engaged faculty and staff at all levels. The initial obstacle proved beneficial for the engagement of more participants.

Another challenge was to recruit and award scholarships for advanced degrees and research stipends. The faculty initially responded cautiously because funds had previously been sparse and they were discouraged from seeking professional development. During the last two years of the grant, the faculty who were pursuing higher degrees got the word out and recruited more colleagues to apply. Once the team adequately promoted the opportunities, the faculty responded enthusiastically. SGU learned that it is important to have a clear plan and strong communication when proposing for professional development grants.

Models and Sustainability

SGU developed a strong model for institutional assessment and continuous improvement of teaching and learning. The University focused its general faculty training on assessment of program and learner outcomes. This provided common knowledge to improve the academic experience of students. The new knowledge engendered an attitude of shared accountability for improving student outcomes. Faculty working on degrees led efforts to develop new assessment strategies as well as a new technology plan for the University.

The CTE became a visible symbol of high expectations for improving instruction. The project expected to establish a physical center for teaching excellence, housed with full-time staff. However, the University determined that sustaining a building and staff after the grant ended would be difficult, and they were looking at utilizing technology resources more fully. Therefore, SGU decided to create a web-based CTE. The CTE is sustainable at little cost and is accessible through technology in real time by faculty. A virtual center is a cost-effective model that other TCUs can replicate.

The CTE modeled continuous evaluation of its own programming by administering evaluation surveys after each faculty development activity. The University showed that professional development renewed passion for teaching that resulted in student passion for learning. Improved teaching, cultural knowledge, and increased integration of technology in the classroom contributed to increased retention and graduation. Improved collegiality and assessment capacity positioned the institution for continued accreditation. Highly qualified faculty raised the bar for higher education credentials for students, staff, and faculty. More qualified and culturally competent faculty became role models for coming generations of leaders and students. All participants felt a surge in confidence in the quality of educational experience at a tribal university. The faculty summed up the importance of the project: “*Lakol Wicoun*. The Lakota Way of Life will continue.”

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Nora Antoine, a Rosebud Sioux tribal member, exemplifies leadership through professional development. She received her master’s degree from Oglala Lakota College and enrolled in a doctoral program with financial assistance from the **Woksape Oyate** grant. Nora is the business department chair and instructor at SGU. Her higher learning helped her to develop the only business degree program at the University. She says, “For a number of years, I had hoped to work on a doctoral degree and because of this support, I have successfully completed my coursework at Antioch University’s Leadership and Change program! Most instructors at tribal colleges constantly learn from our students. Because of all that I have learned from my own advanced studies, I have more to share with them. My exposure to advanced studies has not only positively contributed to my own individual learning and to that of my own department, but being an engaged academic learner has contributed to a newly developed collaborative master’s degree with another academic department at our institution. It’s amazing how much has opened up for me personally and professionally because of the Lilly Endowment’s support for which I am very thankful!” After Nora’s research presentation to faculty, four more instructors initiated master’s degree work. Nora has become an academic role model and leader at SGU.



Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Establish a Center for Teaching Excellence to advance faculty knowledge, performance, and teaching methodologies and to improve student success

- Developed a virtual Center for Teaching Excellence – a website to share research, best practices, and instructional resources
- The project provided common professional development activities for all faculty
- Faculty requested monthly gatherings to share new knowledge
- Hosted seminars with regional TCUs to share best practices
- Produced instructional DVDs to capture traditional wisdom
 - ◊ 700 copies distributed to community partners and families
- Evaluation of faculty development efforts showed:
 - ◊ Improved quality of instruction
 - ◊ Improved program and student learning assessment
- Student course evaluation showed improved satisfaction with teaching
 - ◊ Enrollment increased in updated courses
 - ◊ Graduation and retention improved by 5% between 2008-2011

Goal 2: Build leadership capacity within the current faculty through advanced education, professional development training, and support

- 4 employees completed master's degrees
- 4 employee degrees in progress
 - ◊ 2 near completion for master's degrees
 - ◊ 2 completed coursework for doctoral degrees
- Advanced degrees supported promotions and improved job performance
 - ◊ 20 faculty updated content knowledge and improved job performance
 - ◊ 3 employees promoted to higher level of administrative responsibility
 - ◊ 1 master's degree recipient hired to teach in human services
- Faculty scholarship recipients created new programs
 - ◊ 1 new master's in business administration program
 - ◊ 1 new Lakota Studies baccalaureate degree in art



SISSETON WAHPETON
COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



SISSETON WAHPETON COLLEGE

Sisseton, South Dakota

\$400,000

Academic Programs, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Prior to receiving the *Woksape Oyate* grant, Sisseton Wahpeton College (SWC or the College) offered two-year degrees, and tribal members had to travel at least 90 miles round trip to access bachelor's programs at other institutions. This provided opportunities for a few tribal members, but limited tribal self-determination about the academic content of programs that served the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Oyate (or tribe, in Dakota).

SWC wanted to develop its own four-year programs that would better serve the needs of the Oyate that chartered the College. Educational outcomes for tribal students had suffered for years. Many older teachers in local communities were retiring. The tribe wanted SWC to develop a new bachelor's program that would prepare a new group of teachers who would be culturally proficient and help improve educational outcomes for their children.

Project Design

SWC proposed to use its *Woksape Oyate* award to create its first four-year degree program in elementary education. The new degree would integrate Dakota Studies courses and use the Dakota worldview to frame the instructional approach. The College would use project funds to hire an education coordinator who would oversee curriculum and accreditation processes. A community advisory board would guide the cultural content of the new programming. SWC planned

to review and strengthen the course content of its associate's degree program in Early Childhood Education, which would create a pathway for the bachelor's program. As well, the College intended to recruit for program enrollment paraprofessionals who already had associate degrees and offer flexible course delivery options. Graduates could be highly marketable because they could fill local teacher vacancies.

Valuing Existing Intellectual Capital

“We tell people that intellectual capital is what our combined intellect is worth and what we can do with it. We believe that the intellectual capital already exists in the community. What the College can help provide is a way to harness and give direction to that capital. People need degrees and jobs that lend value to their existing intellect. They need a vehicle to use it to help their community.”

- Whitney Renville, Education Program Coordinator

Intellectual Capital Gained

Dakota people believe in lifelong learning. Through this degree program, the *Oyate* began to restore its sovereign control over teacher training and ensure the survival of the intellectual capital contained in the Dakota identity, language, and culture of its children and families.



Dr. Karen Comeau (left) and Whitney Renville (right) meet with an elder, a tribal teacher, and a student in advisory sessions

The College strengthened academic programming overall and developed new pathways to advanced degrees and employment opportunities.

SWC discovered that its general studies curriculum needed to be more challenging and that students required stronger writing skills to succeed in upper-level coursework. Moreover, accreditation required that faculty members have higher educational credentials to teach

baccalaureate courses. The College added two new writing courses and hired new adjunct instructors who were experienced in the field of education. The hiring of qualified teachers helped SWC secure permission from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to offer upper-level courses prior to final program accreditation.

The College wanted to encourage its graduates to apply for the new four-year degree. SWC discovered a number of linkages that qualified students from a variety of majors to enter the Education baccalaureate program. For example, the College expanded its pool of candidates for the new degree by admitting students with an associate degree in Dakota Studies as well as those with an education background.

Developing a strong Dakota-based academic program improved community relationships and kept the intellectual capital within the community. SWC engaged a strong collaborative effort with its local schools to design a program that would be mutually beneficial. School administrators saw the need to hire culturally competent teachers. The College invited teachers from the tribal schools to participate on an advisory board to guide the curriculum content. This helped SWC learn what the schools needed, and school administrators gained confidence in the program, encouraging their paraprofessional staff to enroll.

The College was surprised to find that because of the program's Dakota emphasis, some tribal members have moved back to the reservation with the specific goal of earning their four-year Education degree at SWC. Many of the students enrolled in the program were paraprofessionals with years of experience in the field. Six Head Start teachers transferred from another institution to complete the associate's degree program, which is the credential required for their positions. These six committed to continuing on to the new bachelor's program and have emerged as leaders at the College; enriching the student environment with their practical experience. These tribal citizens hold a strong personal vision for improving educational outcomes for their *Oyate*.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College found that it was underprepared to launch such an ambitious project without a full study of institutional readiness, and there were many unexpected challenges along the way. SWC had initial difficulty hiring a qualified candidate to fill the education coordinator position. The College wanted someone with previous experience in program development who would understand

the cultural intent of the new curriculum. It hired someone for the position in the first year, but immediately transferred her to cover teaching and leadership responsibilities in the English department. She did the best she could to try to manage both roles, but was subsequently appointed vice president of academic affairs, which further limited her time. The College recruited a candidate in year two with essential qualifications, but she stayed only one week due to a misunderstanding about the scope of the work.

The College found that it needed to clarify the job description and revised the salary line to make it more commensurate with the work expected. By the end of year two, SWC hired Whitney Renville. Whitney was a licensed teacher with several years of experience in local schools. She had earned credibility in the community, though she lacked administrative and program development experience. The College subsequently hired Dr. Karen Comeau, a retired tribal college president, to mentor and guide Whitney through the program building and accreditation processes.

Models and Sustainability

Despite its challenges, the lessons SWC learned and the processes it developed can benefit colleges that want to offer four-year degree programs. The College developed a successful model for program development based on building relationships within the community and providing culturally appropriate academic content. An important first step was a needs analysis conducted by the *Oyate*. The tribal government sanctioned programs that would best meet its local economic and educational requirements. The community advisory board included tribal elders and experienced tribal teachers that guided curriculum and pedagogy to best suit cultural standards. It was important for SWC to hire an outside consultant who could help to build the capacity of their staff to develop new programs.

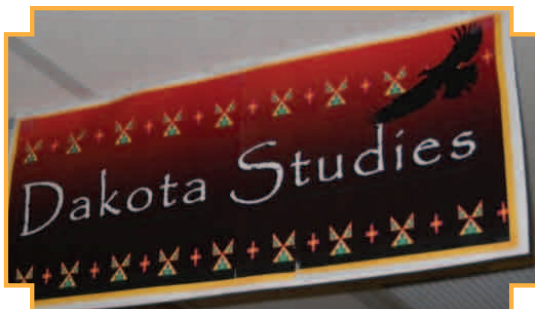
SWC designed a flexible course delivery system, including distance and online coursework. The College developed new practicum sites at local schools and hosted distance education courses at those sites. This enabled working professionals' and students who lived in remote areas increased access to the program. The program is self-sustaining because there are enough students enrolled in the general education and early childhood education associate programs who want to continue in the bachelor's program. Its review of academic programs identified multiple pathways for entry that helped to ensure sufficient enrollments.

The College identified another institutional factor for successful accreditation of new degree programs. SWC positioned itself to develop another four-year degree programs in business and information technology on a parallel timeline with the education degree. While the two programs did not share curricular content, the two project leads had common training and supported each other through the accreditation process. Developing new degree programs taught SWC the importance of partnerships and collaboration, both within the organization and with community and external resources.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Marjorie Iyarpeya is a 27-year-old single mother and member of the Sisseton Wahpeton *Oyate*. Marjorie already has an associate's degree from the College in general studies and she is continuing to take classes to complete an associate of arts degree in Child Development. She entered the Elementary Education bachelor's program in the fall of 2011. Marjorie says she wants to be a teacher because "I love watching kids' eyes light up when they learn something new, and I get to be somebody's hero." She feels that having her four-year degree will help her better support her six-year-old daughter Makayla. Marjorie says, "I will better understand my child, where she is in school, and what I can do to help." She travels 50 miles from her home in Watertown, SD, to attend classes at the College because she likes the friendly, family-oriented atmosphere and having Native American instructors.



Whitney Renville, Dr. Diana Canku, and Dr. Karen Comeau at the *Woksape Oyate* evaluation training

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Develop and accredit a four-year baccalaureate elementary education program

- Hired a full-time education coordinator and adjunct instructors
- Revised and upgraded General Studies program
 - ◇ 19 courses developed and approved
 - ◇ 3 new bachelor's courses delivered by distance education
 - ◇ Established education resource center in the library
- Developed admission policies and application procedures
- New degree program recommended for accreditation by HLC and state board of education

Goal 2: Strengthen the early childhood associate's degree program and maintain viability as a terminal degree for employment

- Redesigned degree to function as a pipeline to the bachelor's program
 - ◇ Prerequisite course standards revised and upgraded
 - ◇ 2 new classes and a practicum offered each semester
 - ◇ 3 general education courses approved for distance learning at practicum sites

Goal 3: Recruit and retain new students to the elementary education program

- Personal outreach to tribal programs and local schools
 - ◇ 11 students enrolled in the bachelor's program
 - ◇ 14 freshmen students declared elementary education major



SITTING BULL COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Working Together to Improve Student Writing

“According to faculty and staff of Sitting Bull College, the 7th Generation Academic Excellence Center project built unity between and among people, particularly in their thoughts and their plans for student success. The Excellence Center provided a coordinator and tutors who helped the College to implement a full-fledged writing center where students could receive assistance with writing assignments.”

- Dr. Karen Gayton Comeau,
Director AEC

faculty and local educators. The College would extend the project scope through a new collaboration that incorporated K-12 school administrators from across the reservation. SBC would encourage faculty scholarship and develop a publishable model on best practices for writing instruction at a tribal college.

SITTING BULL COLLEGE

Fort Yates, North Dakota

\$700,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Sitting Bull College (SBC or the College) struggled with retention due to pervasively low literacy skills for incoming freshmen. It wanted to work with local schools to improve literacy and high school graduation rates. However, the College did not have enough staff to take on such a broad initiative, and its current staff was already overworked. SBC needed to create a new position and hire employees specifically to address the literacy challenges. The College also needed to enhance the skills of all faculty and staff to support students effectively in developing appropriate levels of written and oral communication skills.

Project Design

The *Woksape Oyate* project would design an innovative and systemic approach to researching best practices and improving college success, literacy, and communication skills for SBC students. The College would establish the 7th Generation Academic Excellence Center (AEC) and hire a dedicated project lead to oversee the grant activities. SBC planned to hire professional and peer tutors to coach student writing at both a site-based center and in classrooms. The physical center would host a modern computer lab using tutoring software to provide hands-on writing practice for students. The AEC design would use institutional data from freshmen placement tests to determine future faculty professional development needs in improving writing instruction across the campus.

The project planned to strengthen collaborative efforts among the entire educational community through common professional development and training opportunities for SBC

Intellectual Capital Gained

SBC defined its intellectual capital as “the sum of all knowledge and wisdom of its people,” which encompasses the virtues of the past and the intellectual and creative achievements of contemporary Indigenous scholars. The College saw the leadership potential among the younger generation as part of its intellectual capital. SBC’s capacity to provide educational, economic, and social development of its students was critical to developing intellectual capital among its constituency.

The 7th Generation Academic Excellence Center engaged the faculty in critical inquiry that resulted in effective instructional practices and stronger academic programming. The AEC devoted significant attention to professional development. Faculty participated in several common training activities focused on improving teaching. SBC held an initial colloquium on “Communicating the Lakota Way” for faculty and staff. The discussion helped them define the challenges Lakota students experience in reading, writing, and speaking Standard English. Faculty analyzed effective pedagogy with tribal college students, revised their thinking, and institutionalized new teaching and learning practices to perpetuate student success.

Faculty development renewed enthusiasm for teaching, and their newfound creativity improved student engagement in the classroom. They were trained on “Writing Across the Curriculum” and “Scholarship of Teaching and Learning” models. Subsequently, faculty worked together to initiate a process for embedding writing assignments in all courses. Monthly discussions helped to sustain faculty learning and provided opportunities for intensive program assessment. The level of faculty engagement to advance teaching and learning positions the College to develop future academic programs and related processes.

The 7th Generation Academic Excellence Center improved literacy and first-year success among SBC students and established a best practices model based on research. A literature search by the AEC illuminated the first year experience as the most crucial to student success. Through leadership of the AEC staff, the College instituted several student success and first year experience best practices, including initiating a freshmen orientation, advising for students at risk, and small group mentoring with faculty and staff.

The AEC provided student support strategies including individualized instruction and coaching, a writing lab, in-classroom tutoring, and targeted outreach to students struggling with attendance. By placing tutors in foundations-level English courses and the psychology of student success courses, the tutor was able to reach nearly all first time students. The AEC also provided fun activities to encourage student interest in improving their written and oral communication skills. SBC established a student writing and speech club and students represented the college and made final rounds at AIHEC student competitions. The AEC increased student confidence in public speaking, written and oral communication, and the improved success promoted retention.

AEC faculty developed the SBC model for teaching writing. A partnership between English faculties at SBC and North Dakota State University helped identify research projects that refined the College’s model for writing improvement. The model includes four cyclical components: research and best practices, comprehensive assessment, effective teaching, and authentic evaluation. SBC completed and vetted its model at the 2011 *Woksape Oyate Summit on Intellectual Capital*. Faculty also submitted research papers for publication and shared the model at an international conference. The AEC staff received an invitation to present their model to the faculty of Tohono O’Odham Community College in March 2011 and received positive evaluations.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College wanted to address retention but encountered a barrier that was previously unidentified: student attendance. The literature on addressing low attendance calls for intrusive outreach to students. However, among tribal people there is a cultural stigma related to intrusion. The College used the culturally sanctioned social role of the tribal elder to correct a young person's nonproductive behavior and hired an attendance tutor. She traveled to students' homes and met face-to-face with those at risk of failing. The attendance tutor communicated with students over a six-week period, and provided tutoring to help them stay on top of their studies. Forty-nine percent of the students passed their class. Because of the success rate, the College will retain the attendance tutor position and continue the practice. The external project evaluator recommended that the board establish attendance as a strategic priority and that the president initiate an institution-wide retention task force to sustain the gains made under the grant.

Models and Sustainability

The *Woksape Oyate* project enabled SBC to extend the discussion of intellectual capital throughout the wider educational community. The College recognized that proper academic preparation should begin prior to college enrollment. They engaged educators and administrators across the local educational spectrum in a new joint effort to address the literacy challenges of incoming freshmen. The AEC initiated a formal Standing Rock Education Consortium and offered annual professional development days for all staff at reservation schools. Subsequently, the Consortium adopted a common writing instruction method across the reservation. Attendance at events showed a high interest in collaborative training and a survey of participants found high agreement with SBC's conclusions about student learning styles, factors affecting student success, and best practices in teaching.

Monthly meetings of the K-12 and College administrators focused awareness of intellectual capital and secured a shared responsibility for Indian student academic achievement. K-12 schools saw the importance of attendance interventions and developed a new tracking policy to prevent dropout. The speech and writing club engaged 50 high school students in contests, which brought high school students to the campus and increased their confidence to go to college. A critical component of the collaboration was the initiative to involve high school English teachers on an External Advisory Committee for the AEC. The College invited the teachers to assist in scoring freshman writing assessments. This helped public educators understand what was missing in the student skill set and invigorated a new commitment to correcting the problem.

The project changed the framework for public school teaching to one that views Native students from a strength-based perspective and promotes high expectations for academic excellence. The SBC model is sustainable because it promotes a seamless educational experience from grade school through college. The success of its collaborative and institutional efforts positioned the College to receive an award from the Wal-Mart Corporation that supports success in first generation college students. The College president pledged to support the AEC after the grant ends using general institutional and Title III funding.



Tribal members with advanced degrees speak to the Intellectual Capital Symposium

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Travis Alkire is a conscientious, bright young man who enrolled in a developmental course in English, based on the writing section of his placement test. Travis became familiar with the AEC because his Foundations of English class met in the center. Travis knew that he could come to the AEC for help the next semester when he had writing assignments in other classes. Lorie Hach, AEC Director, coached Travis in writing a six-page research paper that pleased Travis.

Lori said, “He gained confidence and improved so much. We told him that we knew he aspires to become a tribal leader, but we think he should come back to SBC as an English teacher because he is a confident, articulate writer and speaker. Travis had not even considered English as a major (he had been thinking about law), but now he liked the idea.” Travis knew he would be a good role model for younger students. At one point, he got tears in his eyes when he recalled that no teacher had ever expressed this kind of confidence in him. He could not wait to tell his mother and to research colleges and universities with a good English writing program.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Establish 7th Generation Academic Excellence Center (AEC) to improve literacy skills and promote faculty scholarship on teaching and learning

- AEC hired 2 professional tutors and 5 peer tutors
 - ◇ Offered night and weekend tutor services on 2 campuses
 - ◇ Integrated tutors into English and psychology courses
 - ◇ 70% retention rate in psychology of student success course Fall 2011-Spring 2012
 - ◇ Added an attendance and outreach counselor in year four
 - ◇ Improved at-risk student completion by 49%
- AEC offered 3 faculty writing instruction workshops and ongoing discussion groups
 - ◇ 95% of participants increased knowledge of best practices for writing and student engagement
 - ◇ 39% changed course requirements to include more writing
 - ◇ 23% of courses are now writing intensive
 - ◇ 3 courses now require students to use the AEC writing lab
- Tutoring and professional development improved literacy outcomes
 - ◇ 4% net increase in pre/post writing scores 2007-2012
 - ◇ 5% annual increase in English and speech course retention 2007-2011

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Continued

- AEC increased student confidence in written and oral communication
 - ◊ SBC speech team placed third at 2010 AIHEC student competition
 - ◊ 1 student essay published by Tribal College Journal
 - ◊ 10 high school student essays published in SBC newsletter
- 2 articles on AEC model prepared for publication
 - ◊ Paper submitted to Tribal College Journal: “Assessing writing in the Tribal College: A story of collaboration among college instructors, middle and secondary teachers, and university researchers”
 - ◊ Manuscript presented at Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities: “Is there a best way? In search of a model for teaching language arts to Native American Students on Standing Rock”

Goal 2: Increase college readiness through collaboration across local education system

- Education Consortium formed between SBC and public school administrators
- 8 instructional workshops held for SBC faculty, community professionals, and public school teachers
 - ◊ Common writing method adopted across K-16 system
- 4 intellectual capital development symposia held
 - ◊ 400 pre-K through college teachers and staff attended annually
- High school English teachers served on AEC external advisory board
 - ◊ Helped score SBC freshman writing assessments



Dr. Laurel Vermillion, SCB president, and project lead Dr. Karen Comeau at the *Woksape Oyate* evaluation training meeting



SBC hosted annual Intellectual Capital Symposia for faculty and K-12 educators



SOUTHWESTERN INDIAN POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

SOUTHWESTERN INDIAN POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Albuquerque, New Mexico

\$150,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) strives to produce graduates that can be competitive in the workforce and move forward to four-year degrees. SIPI is one of the few tribal colleges chartered by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Education and, until recently, it lacked an organizational culture that encouraged shared governance. A recent accreditation study revealed that the faculty had limited input with the curriculum and few opportunities to evaluate student learning. This had a negative effect on its continued accreditation status. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) mandated SIPI to strengthen shared governance processes and demonstrate data-driven improvement of its academic programs, curricula, teaching methods, and student services. SIPI wanted to establish a “culture of assessment” that would energize shared accountability and help it regain accreditation.

Project Design

SIPI received funding late in the grant cycle. They proposed a three-year project that would engage the entire campus in improving its capacity for assessment and accountability. Its goal was to meet accreditation requirements and create a comprehensive and systematic training program, policies, and practices. The new approach would change the culture from a

top-down system to one that reflected shared responsibility for institutional success. SIPI conducted a survey of existing assessment practices and data. It engaged a consulting firm with substantial tribal college experience to help design training events, infrastructure, assessment protocols, and accountability measures for all employees. SIPI would use part of its grant to provide initial funding of a permanent position in the office of institutional research to oversee assessment of institutional effectiveness.

Intellectual Capital Gained

The SIPI’s intellectual capital rests in the dedication and hard work of the faculty and staff. Faced with a diminished accreditation status, it rose to the challenge. Everyone at the SIPI worked tirelessly to learn and implement rigorous assessment practices and take on new roles and responsibilities.

Institutionalizing a Culture of Assessment

“Ultimately, the *Woksape Oyate* grant gave us the resources and impetus to move into uncharted territories of adult learning. We built and are utilizing a new system to assess student learning and are engaged in continuous improvement.”

- Valerie Montoya, Vice President of
Academics and Project Lead

The focus on institutional assessment engendered a climate of shared accountability. SIPI created a viable and sustainable infrastructure for institutional assessment that required commitment and hard work from all employees. When the project was unable to hire a director, a department chair stepped in to start the assessment program and organized support staff.

SIPI established a Faculty Steering Committee to oversee program activities and evaluate outcomes. They developed a shared governance policy and established the Curriculum Committee to ensure that the faculty had control over the curriculum. Training for the president, vice president, and board of regents showed them how to link assessment strategies with core institutional processes, such as strategic planning and the budget. Faculty members learned curriculum mapping and program-level assessment skills. Each academic department updated its course descriptions and developed External Advisory Committees to ensure up-to-date content. All employees worked on cross-disciplinary committees that restructured general education competencies. Committees performed other key tasks, such as developing protocols for program and curriculum reviews and an advisory committee handbook.

SIPI hired a director of institutional effectiveness in the *Woksape Oyate* grant's second year that set up student performance indicators and implemented a web-based reporting system. Faculty could easily enter mandatory program and student outcome data. The Curriculum Committee created a comprehensive program assessment model for certificate and degree programs, general education, and developmental education programs. The committees defined, aligned, and specified program mission, goals, student learning outcomes, and program assessment methods.

The Curriculum Committee created an annual report process for faculty and staff to link specific program assessment to the five-year program reviews. This helped faculty determine the viability of an academic program and document changes. SIPI embedded shared governance, assessment, program reviews, and program and committee service into faculty performance evaluations to ensure the institutionalization of these practices. SIPI now has revised course curricula within nearly all its certificate and degree programs. Access to data has improved curricula, instruction, and student services. The academic program ties to the knowledge and skills needed by graduates when they enter the workforce or transfer to other institutions of higher learning.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The Fund rejected the SIPI's first proposal because it was too broad and did not adequately address how its program would build intellectual capital or institutional capacity. SIPI submitted a second time and received an award, but the president at the time found internal difficulties with the federal accounting system and returned the *Woksape Oyate* award. SIPI hired a new president in year three of the grant cycle, who identified the institution's need for building a climate of assessment and data-driven improvement. SIPI applied for and received the shorter-term award and now enjoys campus-wide involvement in institutional assessment that led to a successful accreditation progress report in 2011. The HLC noted improvement in the assessment and program review infrastructure. A successful *Woksape Oyate* program positioned SIPI to collect the evidence of institutional effectiveness that is required for reaccreditation in 2013.



President Sherry Allison supported shared governance to improve institutional assessment

Models and Sustainability

The *Woksape Oyate* project created a new model for shared governance at SIPI. The project forced SIPI to evaluate how it could embrace higher education standards and practices within the context of a federally operated institution. The project originally proposed a top-down approach to developing and implementing assessment. However, it became clear that the faculty would need to invest in system change for it to succeed. The project gave faculty and staff meaningful roles on the committees and thereby inspired ownership for institutional improvement.



SIPI's entire faculty invested in shared accountability for strengthening academic programs and assessing student learning

Faculty members are now heavily involved in decision making at SIPI. The internal dialogue across programs has increased, and shared governance has become the norm. The new climate on campus emphasizes engagement of all faculty and staff, knowledge sharing, and motivation for achieving accreditation. The institution has aligned itself with the culture of higher education rather than with the culture of a federal institution, which enhanced its credibility and legitimacy.

SIPI has developed processes to ensure that assessment will remain part of the campus culture and operations. To sustain the successes of their project, the institution plans to use assessment and program review data to apply for Title III funds from the U.S. Department of Education to continue support for its assessment coordinator position.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Valerie Montoya, project lead and vice president of academic affairs at SIPI reflected on the past two years and what lies ahead, and found she was excited. “The *Woksape Oyate* grant gave us the resources and impetus to move into uncharted territories of adult learning. Recently, the college suffered an existential crisis when its regional accrediting body diminished its status. This crisis triggered a deep restructuring of the college and a rebuilding of several internal systems. The project transformed my own understanding on a deep level, as an educator and an agent of change regarding what we must do to ensure the success of our students and their communities. The grant allowed me to engage faculty, students, and Native community leaders to articulate what we mean by “student learning,” and how to assess it at our tribal unique college. Now, I view our ongoing challenge as the need to build a learning environment that values our diverse students and their communities and assists them in attaining *and* integrating strong knowledge for their professional fields of choice. There are three dimensions of student learning. “Culture” affects how students learn, how they view faculty, and how they access and utilize information; “academics” includes the body of knowledge, skills, and abilities students need to master as they prepare for the workforce or for bachelor’s degree education; and, “professional” includes the soft skills students need to take with them into the workplace. In fact, these dimensions are connected and their interrelationship ensures adult learners the opportunity to excel, to ask broader and deeper questions, and to become creators of knowledge not just receivers.”

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Develop and institutionalize an assessment program of student achievement

- Hired an assessment coordinator
- Hired consultants to help identify training needs and develop plan
- Trained executive team and board on their role in assessment
- All employees received assessment training and improved job performance
- Established 3 new cross-disciplinary committees
 - ◇ Assessment Steering Committee
 - ◇ Developed program assessment manual
 - ◇ Created Advisory Committee Handbook
 - ◇ Curriculum Committee
 - ◇ General Education Committee
 - ◇ Revised general education learning outcomes
- All faculty contribute to online reporting of learning and program outcomes



STONE CHILD COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People

STONE CHILD COLLEGE

Box Elder, Montana

\$700,000; Supplemental \$56,994

Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

Stone Child College (SCC or the College) found it challenging to attract and retain faculty because of its small size and isolated location. The most talented students left the reservation and rarely returned to reinvest their education and leadership skills at home because of poor employment prospects. The College believed that if it increased the number of tribal members among its faculty, more students would choose the College rather than leave the reservation for higher education. Faculty agreed the project might allow the College to hire more of its own tribal members as teachers and thereby infuse the academic environment with more cultural experts.

Project Design

SCC proposed an innovative program to prepare a cohort of tribal members to replace retiring faculty. Faculty would identify students with particular talents and encourage them to apply for the program, or students could apply on their own. The board of regents would select 11 students to receive financial assistance to encourage completion of advanced degrees. Recipients would sign an agreement to teach at the College after graduation, provided positions were available. The project planned to pair program students with senior faculty for mentoring and summer internships. The grant would allow the College to create a new part-time position to oversee the project: a retention specialist who would keep continuous contact with students, track attendance and grades, and identify supplemental resources to encourage program completion. By developing and hiring tribal students, the



Educating the Present to Educate the Future

“Our main goal was to educate our own tribal members so they could come back to teach at Stone Child College. SCC has already hired program graduates to teach courses and perform administrative duties. The Woksape Oyate program increased the intellectual capital of the institution, and degrees for tribal members enriched the workforce on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation.”

- Belden Billy, Retention Specialist

College could increase the number of tribal teachers and thereby strengthen the Chippewa Cree viewpoint in the curriculum.

The Fund awarded SCC a supplemental grant in year three to support the president’s doctoral work in business and leadership. President Melody Henry is a tribal member who graduated from the College in its second year in operation. She is a role model and a beacon of hope for her people. The Fund believed that President Henry’s doctoral degree would help the College prepare to establish baccalaureate degree programs.



President Melody Henry was among the first graduates of Stone Child College

Intellectual Capital Gained

The College found wisdom in the experiences among senior faculty that could benefit a new generation of instructors. It also recognized an untapped reserve of intellectual capital in students who could become leaders and educators.

The College has a strong pool of qualified tribal members who serve their community and stand ready to replace retiring senior faculty members.

The project generated excitement among the student body. A group

of highly motivated applicants emerged who were eager to become future SCC faculty. Fourteen program recipients completed at least one degree and several subsequently initiated degree work at the next level. The program supported one faculty member to complete a doctorate in clinical psychology. He taught at the College in addictions studies for two years, and then transferred to the community clinic where he is reinvesting his expertise in the mental health of his people.

The program did not hire as many participants as it had anticipated, because the senior faculty did not retire at the rate expected. The College has hired one program graduate thus far as a full-time instructor. It hired five graduates as part-time instructors who obtained full-time employment in tribal departments and stayed in their community. The project succeeded in qualifying 14 tribal members to fulfill leadership and teaching roles at the College and within their Nation.

Program participants enriched the campus with new knowledge. As the College implemented the program, the president noticed that summer interns and new graduates brought fresh content and instructional approaches into classrooms. Mentoring became a two-way street as experienced instructors learned from their student partners. Younger graduates were more at ease with technology and incorporated it into their instruction. This helped to engage students, improving learning outcomes. One graduate utilized her technical expertise to set up course delivery online for a new certificate program and thus to reach more students. Another graduate inspired SCC to develop service-learning projects and this improved institutional credibility in the community.

The president's doctoral education expanded her positive influence in the community and the tribal college movement. President Henry's studies in business increased her management and financial skills, and she was able to improve efficiency of operations at the College bookstore and within several departments. Her campus served as a learning laboratory where she applied her coursework immediately. The president increased her community leadership role and had opportunities to share her new business and financial expertise for the betterment of the tribe. She developed a summer training and employment program for more than 100 youth during the summers of 2010 and 2011. Within the broader tribal college movement, many presidents are reaching retirement age. President Henry represents one of several younger presidents whose advanced degree has prepared them to lead the movement into the future.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College had some difficulty with project management, data tracking, and submission of regularly scheduled project reports. Like many small colleges, it had limited personnel to manage multiple responsibilities. It situated the project in the department of institutional development and hired a part-time retention specialist to manage the project who had other duties as well as health issues that diverted his time. Students who moved to other cities to pursue degrees did not always respond

to the outreach efforts. When the Fund had questions about student tracking, the president directed a collective effort to track and mentor students. Near the end of the project, the institutional development administrator retired, and oversight fell to the academic dean. She had not been closely involved in the early work, and this resulted in a final report lacking some of the depth and breadth that the Fund expected. As more newly degreed employees return to work for the College, the Fund hopes that their skills will help SCC to build capacity for project management.

Models and Sustainability

SCC demonstrated that there are talented and capable tribal members at small tribal institutions who want to contribute to their communities. The College identified future leaders who were early in their college experience and provided them with financial and mentoring support to complete degrees beyond the associate level. The program provided tuition scholarships and living expenses and paid a salary in the summer for internships and student teaching. This built loyalty to the College, retained the students in the community, and motivated a high rate of completion.

The College selected a project lead known for his ability to build relationships and recruit students. Senior faculty had already developed mentor relationships with students, and instructors were excited to help students to develop further their intellectual gifts. As senior faculty members retire, the College will have a pool of potential candidates who are qualified, committed, and who are tribal members.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



John Murie started college 10 years ago and eventually received his associate's degree in fine arts. He put his bachelor's degree aside because he needed to work full time to support his family. John had a gift for painting and dreamed of becoming an art instructor. In 2007, he decided to pursue his bachelor's degree, and he enrolled at the College for some refresher courses. John learned of the *Woksape Oyate* scholarship, and the board of regents selected him as one of the program's first cohort of scholars. He transferred to the University of Great Falls (UGF) and began his bachelor's degree work in Spring 2008. At UGF, John excelled at his studies and stayed on the honor roll consistently. He graduated in May 2010 and currently attends a

master of fine arts program at the University of Montana. John is excited to be teaching full time at the college that gave him his start. With the knowledge he gained, he helped the College design a new fine arts program and to add four new courses. John is truly paying it forward for the help he received and realizing his dream to teach art among his tribal people.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase the number of Chippewa Cree tribal members who are qualified to teach at the College

- 21 tribal members received scholarships and mentoring
- 14 completed academic goals
 - ◊ 1 technical certificate
 - ◊ 3 associate's degrees
 - ◊ 6 bachelor's degrees
 - ◊ 3 master's degrees
 - ◊ 1 doctorate
- 5 continue in degree work
 - ◊ 4 students are continuing in bachelor's degree work
 - ◊ 1 student had health problems but hopes to return and complete master's thesis

Goal 2: Replace retiring faculty members with highly prepared tribal members

- All students completed summer internships with faculty mentors
- Faculty passed on teaching wisdom
 - ◊ Instructional workshops and assignments focused on curriculum development, classroom management, research, and assessment
- New instructors hired
 - ◊ 1 hired full time
 - ◊ 5 hired part time

Supplemental Goal: Increase president's credentials and leadership skills

- SCC president completed two doctoral residencies
- SCC board implemented a new educational leave policy





TOHONO O'ODHAM
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Building Success from Within

“Because of the Woksape Oyate grant, TOCC is committed to supporting employees for advanced degrees, and many tribal members will qualify to fulfill leadership positions at the College. In addition, more high school students have permanent pathways for educational success on the Tohono O’odham Nation.”

- Jane Latané, Director of Institutional Research and Development and Project Lead

TOHONO O'ODHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Sells, Arizona

\$700,000

Academic Programs, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

The Tohono O’odham Nation (TON) administered a comprehensive community survey of educational needs in 2004. The results showed that students dropped out of high school because they failed to see a connection between education and their tribal culture. Only five percent of TON citizens had a college degree, and many of the Tohono O’odham Community College (TOCC or the College) staff lacked professional skills and credentials for employment in higher education.

The College needed to develop a unified approach to educational improvement. It had initiated various programs, but it needed to integrate the programs strategically. It wanted to develop a learning environment that would attract and retain students. It needed to improve its ability to assess and modify its academic programs in order to make learning more relevant to the community needs, an area that the accrediting agency had mandated for improvement.

Project Design

TOCC designed a program that would coordinate various programs and resources already in place to improve college readiness, strengthen the community value for education, make the curriculum more culturally relevant, and develop its capacity for assessment.

To address academic preparation, the *Wisdom from the Desert* project would support the College’s continuing participation in the Foundations of Excellence program, sponsored by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This would result in an extensive self-assessment and an action plan for improving first-year student success. TOCC planned to strengthen its articulation and collaboration with the K-12 systems and implement a summer pre-collegiate program for incoming high school students.

The College hoped that the summer program would increase enrollment and believed that improved teaching and learning would promote retention. The project proposed to support a number of professional development opportunities for staff that would build its capacity for assessment of

teaching and learning and would strengthen the cultural frameworks across academic programs. Teams of faculty would work with the *Himdag* (O'odham culture) Committee to review and revise all courses and to design a new associate degree program in Tohono O'odham Studies.

Intellectual Capital Gained

TOCC defined intellectual capital as the knowledge of the instructors, students, and community, as well as the Tohono O'odham way of life. Over time, the College came to see intellectual capital as an investment in the people and institution for long-term growth and success.

The College built community partnerships to improve academic preparation. TOCC developed the Summer Bridge program to help high school students acquire skills and information for college success. The development, ongoing evaluation, and continuous revision of the initial summer program focused faculty on student success. The College adapted the Summer Bridge curriculum for a permanent college preparation course, a new requirement for first-year students.

TOCC also supported a community-wide partnership with K-12 schools to promote college preparation, and offered dual-credit courses at the high school. The College plans to expand dual-enrollment offerings with college-level math and science courses. The onsite courses were effective in attracting students and changing the College's image and credibility within the community. Success in this area helped it obtain a new four-year grant to perpetuate scholarships for dual-enrollment students.

Professional development strengthened cultural infusion in academic programs. Most of the faculty attended the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) at the University of Arizona and increased their proficiency in cultural curriculum development. In addition, the project hosted several elder presentations covering cultural ways, leadership, and political topics. The AILDI faculty cohort utilized their training to develop a plan for language revitalization, cultural instructional modules and assessment tools, and revised the entire core curriculum. The College implemented a new conversational O'odham course, which it now requires of all employees. The faculty designed a Tohono O'odham Studies certificate program that will evolve into a new associate's degree. Due to the expansion of this academic area, the College hired an additional faculty member who will teach courses to remote communities using distance-learning technology. The grant has provided the impetus and resources for the College to address the community need for culturally relevant higher education that has high academic standards.

The most long-lasting impact of the *Wisdom from the Desert* project is future leadership development. TOCC discovered an untapped reserve of leadership potential among its tribal employees who had previously been unable to pursue advanced degrees. The project supported a cohort of tribal employees for a master's program in community college leadership. The program graduates will help overcome a longstanding challenge to fill leadership positions with qualified tribal members.

Scholarship opportunities and access to professional



The beautiful desert landscape, revealed through the Man in the Maze, an important O'odham symbol

development improved employee morale and commitment. The College created a new set of policies and protocols that will continue to help employees to access opportunities after the grant ends. TOCC is working with the Nation's scholarship office to provide higher education funding not just for students, but for employees of the College as well. These individuals will secure future leadership for the Nation and provide role models for younger generations to follow their educational dreams.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The Fund awarded TOCC at the highest level and had high expectations for its program. The College had a strong committee structure in place, but the unexpected deaths of two key faculty members disrupted project implementation. Project administration fell to a single person who left the College before the end of the first year. TOCC subsequently had trouble filling the positions of project director and evaluator, and it did not meet reporting requirements. By year two, the College risked losing its funding.

TOCC hired a program lead and an evaluator in year two, and the vice president of institutional research increased project oversight. As the work unfolded, the College discovered that its program objectives were too broad and more ambitious than it could realistically accomplish. The Fund's project officer worked with TOCC program personnel to narrow their institutional priorities and establish strategic goals that would build capacity for institutional effectiveness. The College continued to assess and refine activities, and the *Wisdom from the Desert* project accomplished its intended results.

Models and Sustainability

TOCC modified its professional development activities to include consultation and intensive training on assessment of student learning across the campus. This increased faculty accountability and ownership for improved teaching and learning. Strengthened ability to generate and analyze data resulted in course modifications that established a more challenging learning environment. Its increased capacity is sustainable because the College will add a permanent position to coordinate assessment of learning. Its broad and strategic plan for training resulted in an accreditation report that the HLC accepted.

TOCC has institutionalized an expectation for continuous assessment, and it shared what it learned with other TCUs. Following the *Woksape Oyate Summit on Intellectual Capital* in 2011, TOCC invited a number of sister institutions to its campus and visited two campuses to exchange best practices in institutional assessment.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Among the recipients of professional development funding under the grant are two counselors at the College. Anna Marie Stevens is the career counselor. She completed her bachelor's degree just prior to obtaining her position and had not planned to seek a master's degree. She thought she would not be able to afford further education and hesitated to enroll full time because of family responsibilities. With encouragement from TOCC administrators and the promise of a full scholarship under the *Wisdom from the Desert* program, Anna Marie

joined a cohort of other employees in the Educational Leadership master's program at Northern Arizona University. The program structure allowed her to work full time, and with full support of her family, she completed her master's degree in May 2012.

Gabriella Cazares-Kelly is the senior admissions counselor for the College. She, too, had postponed a master's degree due to the demands of her position, family responsibilities, and costs. Her family agreed that the sacrifice was worth it for her to take advantage of the opportunity for an advanced degree relevant to her employment in a community college. She also received her master's degree in Educational Leadership in May 2012. The group of employees took most classes and studied together. They supported each other when their classes, family, and work responsibilities became overwhelming.



TOCC science department updated its agricultural studies with O'odham language and concepts

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Increase academic preparation and college access for first year students

- 14 faculty completed Foundations of Excellence training
 - ◊ Produced a self-assessment and plan for improving first-year experience
- Faculty team designed Summer Bridge Program
 - ◊ 35 precollegiate students participated between Summer 2007 and Summer 2010
- College Prep 101 course implemented for all first year students
- 3 dual-credit courses delivered at local high schools
 - ◊ 125 high school students received college credits between Spring and Fall 2011
- 13 faculty attended College Horizons training
 - ◊ Increased skills and resources to support transition to four-year programs

Goal 2: Develop culturally responsive environment for teaching and learning

- 36 faculty attended AILDI over three summer sessions
- 9 elder cultural knowledge seminars hosted
 - ◊ Faculty designed a community model to encourage families to embrace education
- A new certificate program in Tohono O'odham Studies was accredited by the state

Goal 3: Increase institutional capacity for assessment to meet accreditation mandates

- 12 faculty attended HLC Assessment Academy over three years
- 15 faculty participated in critical analysis and writing workshops
- All faculty and staff participated in multiple on-site assessment trainings
- All courses assessed with student learning outcomes in place by 2012
 - ◊ Baseline data compiled
 - ◊ Data resulted in revised instructional approaches for literacy and math

Goal 4: Develop leadership and instructional capacity among administrators, faculty, and staff

- 4 administrators and board members attended Harvard leadership institutes
- 12 employees funded for advanced degree work
 - ◊ 4 completed master's degrees in Educational Leadership
 - ◊ 2 doctoral degrees, 2 bachelor's degrees, and 4 associate's degrees in progress
 - ◊ 5 employees completed teaching certificates



TURTLE MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Raising Community Interest in Language Revitalization

“The project brought the College together to preserve and maintain the Turtle Mountain languages and cultures, which is important for all tribal members and for the future of our children and grandchildren. It has become a concentrated effort to revise the campus and educational programs.”

- Larry Henry, Academic Dean and Project Lead

TURTLE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Belcourt, North Dakota

\$250,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

Turtle Mountain Community College (TMCC or the College) surveyed the community in 2002 regarding educational needs and found that language loss was an area of great concern. Turtle Mountain reservation is home to at least three distinct tribal heritage and language groups: Ojibwa, Michif, and Cree. TMCC became alarmed at the degree to which the Michif and Ojibwa languages had declined over 30 years. Much of the wisdom held by elders was disappearing as they passed away and they were not forthcoming about sharing their knowledge.

At the beginning of the *Woksape Oyate* project, only eight staff members were fluent in a Native language and instructors lacked appropriate knowledge and skills to integrate cultural components into the curriculum. Student retention was below that of other tribal and community colleges nationwide. The College believed that tribal students would be more successful if they found their coursework to be culturally relevant.

Project Design

The College designed a unique approach focused on language revitalization through employee professional development and community partnerships. It targeted all employees for language instruction in either Michif or Ojibwa and aimed for a measurable increase in fluency for at least 20 percent of its staff. The College would establish a baseline for improvement by administering an initial campus and community survey.

The survey would also update existing data about language use and fluency across the reservation. The president would appoint a Language Committee from among the faculty who had cultural or language expertise to guide project activities, develop the survey, and provide continuous feedback for improvement. From the survey results, TMCC planned to identify and hire elder mentors who would be willing to co-teach with faculty in the employee language program. The president solicited the support of the tribal council, who approved the College's leadership to preserve its Native languages. The College proposed to leverage that support to motivate collaboration among educational partners. The main project goal was to prepare TMCC instructors to provide a more culturally relevant experience for students in order to improve retention and success.



The College developed a technology-based language lab that also served as a welcoming center for elders and community members

Intellectual Capital Gained

TMCC clearly recognized that the Indigenous languages spoken on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation held the intellectual capital of the people. In particular, the elders held the wisdom and the College needed to draw them to the campus to help revitalize Native languages and strengthen cultural foundations of the curriculum.

Language revitalization engaged elders and the community and helped them overcome historical silence.

There was a long-held community memory of boarding schools and their efforts to eliminate Native languages. The College found that many elders hesitated to speak

their original languages, and most had never visited the College. When TMCC students solicited community participation in the language survey, the elders realized that they were the last hope for passing on the language to their grandchildren. Elders agreed to attend language forums in both Ojibwa and Michif, and these gatherings provided informal opportunities to share traditional meals and tell stories. The College encouraged elders to become language mentors and recorded elders speaking the language and sharing cultural teachings at the forums. TMCC added the recordings to its repository of language and culture resources, and these are now available to students, faculty, and the community for educational use. The *Woksape Oyate* project restored faith and trust in the elders, and engendered an inclusive and cooperative spirit. The elders helped model this by recognizing that everyone on Turtle Mountain has a common need to preserve the languages of their ancestors.

Formal partnerships helped energize community interest in language preservation and revitalization.

The community survey and public education efforts of the project helped raise awareness throughout the reservation about the decline of Indigenous languages and about the need for preservation efforts. The College procured signed agreements for collaboration on language preservation with five local schools and Leech Lake Tribal College. The new educational partners agreed to a common approach to language instruction and committed to work together. Their combined efforts resulted in fun and engaging immersion camps and other family language events that offered natural opportunities for increasing social dialogue. If these partners continue to collaborate, they will be effective in preserving the Indigenous languages on the Turtle Mountain Reservation.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The project design was overly ambitious for producing fluent speakers among staff given the timeframe and resources. The College had to reduce its original goal of having every employee take 400 hours of instruction over four years, to just 100 hours in one semester. All faculty engaged in some cultural and language training, but only 48 percent completed the 100 hours and the College did not assess gains in fluency by the end of the project. The faculty who received language and culture courses reported an increased confidence in incorporating cultural



President Jim Davis explains the TMCC approach for language revitalization

content in their classrooms. Nonetheless, institutional data from 2009 and 2010 showed decreasing student satisfaction with the degree of cultural inclusion in their coursework at TMCC. The College must continue to assess over time the relationship between cultural content and academic success.

In general, TMCC struggled to fulfill project activities, track outcomes, and provide timely reports. It had designated a very small portion of the academic dean's time to manage and evaluate the project, and this was insufficient. The Language and Culture Committee met regularly and provided feedback about the cultural needs of students, but they did not consistently assist in evaluating the project's outcomes. A formal Evaluation Committee never materialized, and the academic dean struggled to capture results and report in sufficient depth to demonstrate institutional level change. In future endeavors the College should plan for greater resources for project management and evaluation.

Models and Sustainability

Language revitalization is a complex process that requires a community wide commitment. The buy-in of the Turtle Mountain tribal council and local school administrators was crucial to launching the efforts. The project established a baseline of data, which communicated to the community the urgency about language loss. The data also helped persuade the employees at the College to participate in language training and brought elders to the table. The *Woksape Oyate* project began a process for developing cultural competence among College employees. The College identified a well known Ojibwa educator and historian to serve as a consultant to the project. The consultant's role was to review and revise existing language curricula, and design the faculty language course.

The project built consensus and developed a committed group to advance language efforts. The president believes that the language program for faculty and staff will continue after the grant funding ends. To ensure its continuation, the TMCC administration and board should implement institutional policies and procedures that make language education mandatory for all staff. The Language Committee should work with the Curriculum Committee to ensure that the College embeds cultural standards throughout the entire academic program.



The Michif Speakers' Forum attracted 20 elders to the College

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

In July 2010, TMCC hosted its first Michif speakers' forum. The Michif language combines French, Cree, and Ojibwa and came about because of the intermarriage of French fur traders and Ojibwa women. In September 2010, the College hosted an Ojibwa speakers' forum. The Ojibwa elders agreed with the Michif elders on the critical need to revitalize, document, and preserve the languages spoken at Turtle Mountain. They sensed the urgency about capturing the languages before they pass away. Project lead Larry Henry found it fortunate that some Ojibwa elders kept the traditional ceremonies alive, and that Ojibwa values remain alive today. Mr. Henry said, "Without our elders support we would not be able to bring back our languages and ceremonies. The TMCC language project has brought to light that preservation and documentation of both languages is at a critical point."



Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Enrich the learning environment at TMCC through employee Native language competency

- Students administered survey in community and on campus as a service learning activity
 - ◇ 18 fluent Michif speakers identified
 - ◇ 12 fluent Ojibwa speakers identified
 - ◇ 204 individuals reported some Native language ability
- Language and culture workshop added to employee orientation
 - ◇ 100% of all faculty and staff participated in language and culture training
- 2 one-credit courses developed and offered for employees
 - ◇ The new courses documented over 1,000 conversational phrases
 - ◇ 48% of all employees completed Native language courses
- 1 Native Studies course revised
 - ◇ 25 language curriculum modules developed
 - ◇ 7 students attended an international conference and developed language preservation networks

Goal 2: Create community partnerships for language revitalization

- 6 community education partners formalized agreements
 - ◇ 2 language immersion camps held
 - ◇ 9 elder mentors assisted with language instruction
 - ◇ 100 community members attended
 - ◇ 16 students received college credit for attendance



UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



First Baccalaureate Programs

“Because of the *Woksape Oyate* project, United Tribes Technical College developed a challenging and engaging learning environment where students, faculty, and staff can realize their potential for leading profound change on a personal, community, and tribal level. Institutional capacity expanded with accreditation of three baccalaureate programs and authorization to offer all degree programs online. UTTC stands as a leader in tribal post secondary education.”

- Dr. Stacie Iken, Director, Upper Division Degree Programs

UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Bismarck, North Dakota

\$700,000

Academic Programs, Recruitment and Retention

Identified Need

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC or the College) has operated since 1972 and offered associate’s degrees since 1982. The president envisioned expanding the academic program to baccalaureate degrees. A feasibility study conducted in 2005 found that 91 percent of UTTC students would enroll in bachelor degree programs if the College offered them. Tribal leaders supported new program development. The study recommended that the UTTC develop bachelor degree programs in Elementary and Special Education, Business Administration, and Criminal Justice.

The College needed to strengthen its infrastructure before developing or seeking accreditation for bachelor’s degree programs. A broad-scale effort would require increasing institutional capacity for assessment and increasing collaboration at every level. Faculty would need to upgrade their academic credentials in order to teach upper level courses. UTTC would need to strengthen its general education program, and all aspects of student services and campus life would need new accommodations for four-year degree students.

Project Design

UTTC proposed an ambitious plan to establish an office of advanced degree programs. It would hire a new director to facilitate the planning and institutional changes required to develop and gain accreditation of three new baccalaureate programs. The director would analyze the College’s personnel needs for teaching upper division coursework, provide professional development for existing instructors, and hire staff. Project funding would cover the initial salaries for faculty

positions required for the new programs. The director would coordinate a review of the current general education competencies and see that the College upgraded prerequisites for the proposed bachelor’s degrees. UTTC faculty would need to invest heavily in the project’s success and forge new educational partnerships in order to develop extensive coursework and assessment standards. Finally, the director would guide the self-study for accreditation and design an evaluation plan and financial model to demonstrate viability and sustainability for the new degree programs.



Dr. Stacie Iken facilitated a well-coordinated effort to establish UTTC's first bachelor's degree programs

Intellectual Capital Gained

Once the project was underway, the College recognized that its intellectual capital resided in the creativity, dedication, and commitment of faculty and staff. UTTC employees soon integrated the term into their discussions about institutional effectiveness, which helped them see new program ventures as an investment, both from an intellectual and financial perspective.

New baccalaureate degree programs prepared graduates for employment and inspired future program development at the College.

UTTC accomplished its goal to offer three new

baccalaureate degree programs that prepare its constituency to work in professions where there is the greatest need. The most important long-term return on investment of the *Woksape Oyate* grant will be the increased number of American Indian graduates who qualify to fill positions in the areas of business, education, and law enforcement in Indian Country. In the past, students who wanted to complete four-year degrees had to leave UTTC. Now, students can complete their education where they have proven success, familiar support systems, stable housing, and where their children can attend elementary and preschools on campus. Students graduating from other tribal colleges with two-year degrees have additional options for a bachelor's degree at a culturally responsive institution. The successful accreditation of the College's first three bachelor degree programs and the completion of its first graduates created the hope that UTTC can develop another, much-needed, degree program in the health care field.

Campus-wide commitment to the project created an institutional culture of shared responsibility for institutional success. The *Woksape Oyate* project provided an opportunity to demonstrate a new level of collaborative work. The entire College needed to gather institutional data and report results consistently, UTTC provided assessment training to its faculty and staff. It added an office of institutional assessment and hired a director to design structures and protocols for campus-wide data management and accessibility. The College used the baseline data from the feasibility study and assessment efforts to shape its new bachelor's degree programs. The project institutionalized assessment and evaluation, and UTTC has come to rely on the continuous flow of data to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Colleagues worked across departments in new ways. Departments with similar subject areas provided better coordination and integration of course content. Academic staff upgraded curriculum and teaching methods to prepare students for the more rigorous coursework. The College added 10 teaching faculty members who held at least a master's degree in their field. Students who enrolled in baccalaureate coursework learned at a new depth not previously found at UTTC. A new level of institutional pride emerged from becoming a baccalaureate degree-granting institution, and everyone had a part in moving the College forward.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

One of the main challenges that UTTC encountered was hiring faculty for baccalaureate-level teaching. As a technical and associate-degree granting institution, the College had hired faculty based on expertise in their field who might not have teaching experience in courses that would matriculate to university systems. The College changed its approach and began hiring new faculty with both practical and scholarly expertise.

Another challenge involved overcoming resistance to changing institutional processes. Almost all departments had to learn to coordinate their efforts to achieve the institutional change of status. The project director encouraged and engaged in continual dialogue with each staff member, included their ideas about new ways to work together, and helped them to overcome obstacles. UTTC staff members became empowered to contribute to change in a positive way.

Models and Sustainability

UTTC can celebrate its new status as one of 13 tribal colleges and universities that offer baccalaureate-level education. Several TCUs are considering following suit and could learn by studying this model. The president's vision for expanding academic offerings was the foundation. A feasibility study was essential for assessing the actual need and interest for specific programs. The College put the infrastructure and processes in place upfront that would assure ongoing and continuous evaluation of outcomes and help UTTC make data-driven decisions about change by linking assessment processes to its strategic plan, mission, and vision.



President Dr. David Gipp is a pioneer in tribal higher education who held the vision and provided the administrative leadership for advanced degree programs at UTTC

The College established a dedicated position to oversee new program development and successfully filled the position with an individual who had technical and professional skills to develop curriculum, navigate accreditation processes, and facilitate institutional change on a broad scale. She effectively built relationships among campus and external partners. Teams of administrators, faculty, and program staff worked together to integrate content across all programs. In addition to the new director of upper division programs, UTTC added a permanent associate dean position within academic affairs to continue to evaluate the first three baccalaureate programs and oversee new program development.

The College had sustainability in mind from beginning to end by including a financial model and an evaluation plan. The College's status as a four-year degree granting institution opened new opportunities for federal and private funding. To sustain program salaries and expenses initially covered by the *Woksape Oyate* grant, the administration has dedicated human, physical, and fiscal resources, ensuring that the three new degree programs will continue into the future.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



Rolenthea Begay’s family saw an advertisement for United Tribes Technical College and encouraged her to find out more. She planned to attend Arizona State University and major in education but was curious when she learned that a tribal college offered the same degree. Rolenthea tells of her thrill in arriving on the UTTC campus and finding a community where everyone was generous and respectful of her traditions and language.

Rolenthea earned the respect of her colleagues throughout North Dakota. They elected her president of the Student North Dakota Education Association. She was the first Native American student and the first UTTC student to hold this office. As president, she represents student teachers of North Dakota on a national level, attending conferences and leading community service initiatives.

The College selected Rolenthea as the first recipient of the David M. Gipp Native Leaders Fellowship, a \$1,000 scholarship, renewable each semester for the duration of her studies. UTTC created the scholarship under its **Woksape Oyate** project to inspire students to pursue academic and leadership excellence. Currently, Rolenthea and other UTTC education students actively participate in the “Outreach to Teach Program.” They travel to under-resourced schools to help with renovations and maintenance. Rolenthea plans to return to the Diné Nation and teach elementary school when she completes her baccalaureate degree. She eventually hopes to earn a master’s degree. Her professional goal is to promote the importance of education to the students she serves.

Project Goals and Results

Goal 1: Enhance institutional capacity to provide bachelor’s degrees

- Hired a director of upper division programs
 - ◊ Developed upper degree strategic plan
- Institutionalized assessment and reporting procedures
- Faculty teams reviewed general education courses to ensure content met bachelor’s degree prerequisites
 - ◊ Developed additional courses to support bachelor’s programs
 - ◊ Revised course descriptions and numbering for consistency with state system
- Revised policies and procedures to accommodate four-year students and families
- Developed financial model and program evaluation processes to sustain program

Project Goals and Results

Goal 2: Develop 3 bachelor's degrees for accreditation

- Established faculty and departmental advisory boards for three new majors
 - ◊ Created degree and student assessment plans
 - ◊ Developed 49 new courses
- Pilot tested a sampling of courses and assessed interest in enrollment
- Submitted institutional change and self-study reports to HLC
- HLC approved 10-year accreditation and online delivery for new bachelor programs
 - ◊ 15 students enrolled in elementary/special education
 - ◊ 25 students enrolled in business administration
 - ◊ 18 students enrolled in criminal justice
- The first cohort of 8 students completed bachelor's degrees in May 2012

Goal 3: Recruit, develop, and retain qualified faculty for new upper division courses

- Evaluated current staff credentials, hiring practices, and professional development needs
 - ◊ Hired 10 new full-time faculty
 - ◊ All have master's degrees or above
 - ◊ 3 are working on doctoral degrees
 - ◊ Adjunct faculty hired to teach specialized courses



WHITE EARTH TRIBAL
AND COMMUNITY
COLLEGE



WOKSAPE OYATE:
Wisdom of the People



Fostering an Institutional Culture of Growth

“Growth and development is the phrase most often connected with WETCC. We continue to revere tradition, yet provide a sound, 21st-century education for both employees and students.”

- Deb McArthur, Project Lead

WHITE EARTH TRIBAL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mahnomen, Minnesota

\$150,000

Professional Development

Identified Need

White Earth Tribal and Community College (WETCC or the College), like many small rural colleges, has had difficulty attracting qualified and experienced employees. Prior to *Woksape Oyate*, many of its administrators, faculty, and staff lacked the appropriate training, degrees, and credentials demanded by higher education industry standards. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) made an accreditation site visit in 2008 and determined that the College needed to strengthen its professional development structures. The College needed to retain and develop current staff, but it lacked formal policies, procedures, and resources to support equitable access to professional development for all employees.

Project Design

The College received a *Woksape Oyate* grant in the third program year to upgrade its human resources structures. Project funds would provide staff with opportunities for essential professional development, and improve institutional readiness to conduct accreditation activities. The College would form

a new committee to determine strategic professional development priorities, develop procedures for requesting and allocating resources, and create policies to support educational and training activities. The College would target administrative cabinet members for advanced degree work to increase the institutional capacity for leadership. The program would provide funding for administrators, faculty, and staff to attain college degrees, professional certifications, and advanced skills appropriate to their positions. The College would expect employees to share what they had learned with others and incorporate new knowledge into classroom instruction, the curricula, and services to improve student learning and professionalize the organizational environment.

To address HLC improvement mandates and prepare for the 2012-2013 accreditation review, the College proposed to use *Woksape Oyate* funds to train its faculty on student assessment. A cross-disciplinary core team would learn how to conduct institutional assessment, form a Self-Study Committee, and provide campus leadership for the accreditation processes.



Intellectual Capital Gained

The College found intellectual capital in its employees' willingness to learn and grow. WETCC found that given the opportunity, and with equitable support structures in place, employees would respond with enthusiasm to advance their educational credentials and job skills.

Employees who furthered their education enhanced institutional capacity for leadership. The *Woksape Oyate* project provided the College the needed resources to update the professional skills and knowledge of key positions. Professional development allowed WETCC to establish its first president's cabinet. *Woksape Oyate* provided funds for cabinet members to complete advanced degrees and provided for training to learn cooperation and diligence. The College now has a cabinet composed of qualified administrators to run an efficient and forward-thinking institution. For example, the cabinet initiated new campus construction projects and acquired new grants to

support two phases of building. This sent a positive message to students and improved the College's image within the community.

Improved institutional credibility promoted new educational partnerships. Prior to the grant, the College struggled to collaborate with local schools. The improved institutional credibility helped WETCC to initiate a dual enrollment program for high school students to take college-level math courses. The local schools now see the relevance of the College within the overall education system. Its improving credibility also helped WETCC establish articulation agreements with the University of Minnesota-Morris. The College was able to submit collaborative grants to build four-year academic degree programs with Bemidji State University, North Dakota State University, and several other institutions.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The College submitted two proposals early in the grant cycle that the Fund did not approve. WETCC had difficulty understanding how to use the grant to build institutional capacity and wrote proposals that focused on meeting basic needs. Within a few years, there was turnover in executive leadership, and the Fund offered another opportunity to propose for a three-year grant. The new president identified professional development as an area of immediate need. Because of the shortened project time line, the College invested in an external consultant to help design a logic model that flowed from identified need to evaluation of outcomes. However, the evaluation plan was unrealistic in terms of its ability to measure institutional-level change in a short time period. The College accomplished its objectives and used the grant effectively to strengthen its human resources. It should continue to gather institutional data to support its theory that professional development of staff will improve student success and the quality of coursework.

Models and Sustainability

The grant provided the perfect opportunity for WETCC to develop a professional development system that addressed concerns cited in the 2008 HLC review. The HLC charged the College with designing a fair and equitable professional development structure. The College established a new committee to develop processes for staff professional development. The committee created a process for requesting development and implemented new performance evaluation measures related to professional growth. The College implemented its first release-time policy for employees



George Bass received his master's of Business Administration and now teaches business classes

engaged in training and education that would enhance their job skills. The committee prioritized resources for administrative leadership development, professionalizing all positions, and increasing the capacity among all employees for institutional assessment. These targets allowed the College to develop key people who can keep WETCC focused on continuous improvement. The College is in an excellent position to gather the data it needs to maintain its accreditation.

Once the priorities were established, the project alerted all employees about the opportunities for professional development. More than half of all employees received some type of formal professional development under the grant. The College supported 25 staff members to attend position-specific trainings and awarded scholarships to six employees to pursue advanced degrees based on institutional priorities. A finance assistant received his master's of Business Administration and became qualified to teach business courses. The broad focus on institutional assessment allowed a core team to attend training on accreditation and assessment of student learning. This team became the leaders that engaged the entire campus in completing the accreditation self-study document that will frame the upcoming HLC site visit.

The *Woksape Oyate* project helped the College revise its thinking about professional development. Developing staff now holds priority in the strategic plan, and WETCC's accreditation competence assures continuous improvement in student outcomes for years to come. By "growing its own," the College raised standards for efficiency and effectiveness and is now seeing an increase in employees who want to pursue advanced education and training. The project created a model institutional infrastructure that supports equitable access for continuous professional growth and development of WETCC employees.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY



As the director of finance at WETCC, Denise Warren sits on the president's cabinet. She benefitted from professional growth under the *Woksape Oyate* project and received additional responsibility. She shared her story: "With the assistance from the Lilly Endowment, I was able to complete a master's degree in strategic leadership. This enabled me to better support my family, increased my skills and abilities to perform the duties of my work, and inspired me to continue to further my educational goals. I began in May of 2010, and was able to complete my degree work in 15 months. The opportunity was extremely beneficial for me as a single mother. I was able to achieve my educational goals while minimizing student loans. My earning capacity has also increased, and WETCC adjusted my salary to match the educational level I now hold. Because of my education, I consider myself a role model for my family and my community. Completing a master's degree gave me an increased level of confidence, improved my management and strategic planning skills, and enabled me to serve our students better. I am currently looking into doctorate degree programs."

Project Goals and Results

Goal: Develop institutional infrastructure that supports improved employee performance and institutional accreditation

- Established the first president’s cabinet
 - ◊ All members hold advanced degrees
- Formed a Professional Development Committee
 - ◊ Prioritized institutional needs
 - ◊ Developed policies and protocols
- Faculty and staff degrees completed
 - ◊ 1 master’s of Business Administration
 - ◊ 1 master’s degree
 - ◊ 1 instructional technology certificate
- Faculty and staff degrees in progress
 - ◊ 3 bachelor’s degrees
 - ◊ 1 associate degree
- 25 employees attended position-specific training activities
- Formed accreditation Self-Study Committee
 - ◊ Developed strategic plan, policies, and resource catalog on learning assessment
 - ◊ Core team trained on institutional assessment
 - ◊ All faculty trained on student learning assessment
- WETCC completed accreditation self-study document



Librarian Claudia Seymour with *Woksape Oyate* project lead Deb McArthur. Ms. Seymour completed a certificate in instructional technology and design for e-learning

WOKSAPE OYATE SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

Distinguished Scholars

High school graduates in the top 10% of his or her graduating class



Mariah Emery

(Rosebud Sioux)

Sinte Gleska University
AA Human Services/Counseling

Years funded: 2008-2010

Current Status: Fourth year

“I thought I was a strong person before college but I am definitely stronger because I stayed in college. This scholarship gave me hope towards my education. I want to help tribal youth, they need someone to listen to them and be their voice.”



Kristah Warrington

(Menominee)

College of Menominee Nation
AA Psychology

Years funded: 2009-2010

Current Status: Third year

“This scholarship helped me through school without struggling financially my first year. I believe being in school made me grow as a person and become more of an adult. I want to continue my education to get my bachelor’s in business administration. I would like to get a good experience in the world and bring back new knowledge to the reservation.”



Adonica Little

(Oglala Lakota)

Oglala Lakota College
BS Business Administration

Years funded: 2010-2012

Current Status: Second year

“Furthering my education would not have been possible without this scholarship. I can see my classes are getting more expensive and I could not be more stress free from worrying about the cost and debt, so I thank you. Overall, the importance of this scholarship has been to teach me that hard work does pay off.”

Distinguished Scholars

High school graduates in the top 10% of his or her graduating class



Oliver Covey
(Oglala Lakota)

Oglala Lakota College
BS Computer Science

Years funded: 2010-2012

Current Status: Second year

“My vision of myself has changed since my first semester. I was nervous and had vague knowledge of what I wanted to do in the future. Now I am confident in college and I have a greater desire for what I want to do. I want to be a hydrologist for the reservation so I can help my community with our streams.”



Jasmine Milam
(Northern Cheyenne)

Chief Dull Knife College
AA Medicine

Years funded: 2010-2012

Current Status: Second Year

“My time at Chief Dull Knife College makes me want to go further my education. I have been accepted into Montana State University and plan to start their pre-medicine program next fall. I want to become a nurse or a doctor and come back to Lame Deer to help my people.”

Keepers of the Next Generation

High performing single mothers already enrolled at a TCU



Teresa Van Alstine
(Saginaw Chippewa)

Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
AA Business Administration

Years funded: 2008-2010

Current Status: Graduated

“The vision that I once had of myself has changed in a huge way. This scholarship made me more focused on being a role model. I will graduate from the University in Northern Michigan in the fall with a bachelor’s degree in Social Work. I plan on continuing my work at the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe’s Social Services Agency, where I am now an intern.”

Keepers of the Next Generation

High performing single mothers already enrolled at a TCU



Glenda Loretto

(Jemez Pueblo)

Institute of American Indian Arts

BFA Studio Arts

Years funded: 2009-2011

Current Status: Graduated

“The scholarship gave me the opportunity to finish my education. I look back at this as the best decision I ever made. It opened my eyes to many new educational opportunities. I became interested in IAIA’s business certificate program and plan to continue my studies and finish the certificate in the fall.”



Louva Hartwell

(Navajo)

Institute of American Indian Arts

BFA New Media Arts

Years funded: 2010-2012

Current Status: Third year

“My vision of myself has changed since I started school in the fall of 2010. I feel more confident and my self-esteem has improved since I returned to school. Last summer I interned with NASA and they selected me for the position again this summer. My future career plans are to work as an instructor at a tribal college or educational entity where I can help to mold the minds of the next generation.”



Brenda Walker

(Menominee)

Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College

AA Native American Studies

Years funded: 2010-2012

Current Status: Graduated

“The scholarship is very honorable. It helped me look beyond myself and help other students to achieve by leading by example. For my plans, I accepted a full-time job at the tribal library. I want to continue my research on the Ojibwa language and to utilize that in the library to help the community members see how important it is.”



Wendy Clairmont

(Salish and Kootenai)

Salish Kootenai College

Elementary Education

Years funded: 2011-2012

Current Status: Second year

“This scholarship enabled me to continue my education. I worked in local schools for 19 years as a paraprofessional in special education. It was a hard decision to leave my job, but I felt it was time to move to the next level. Learning from Native American Studies professors has been a valuable resource for me as a student and future teacher.”

TCU PRESIDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Harvard Seminar for New Presidents

- Dr. Brooke Gondara, Ilisagvik College
- Dr. Luana Ross, Salish Kootenai College
- President Wannetta Bennett, White Earth Tribal and Community College

Advanced Degree and Certificate Work

- Dr. Michael Oltrogge, Nebraska Indian Community College
 - ◇ Completed PhD in Leadership for Higher Education
 - ◇ Certificate in the Management of Nonprofit Agencies from Capella University
- President Debra Parrish, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College
 - ◇ Pursued advanced degree at Northern Michigan University

Succession Planning

- Dr. Verna Fowler, College of Menominee Nation
 - ◇ Hired two consultants for leadership mentoring and succession planning
 - ◇ Completely restructured organizational chart
 - ◇ Trained executive team and committees for transition
- Dr. James Shanley, Fort Peck Community College
 - ◇ Supported professional development of three top-level administrators
 - ◇ Community College's Executive Leadership Institute
 - ◇ MBA degree work at the University of Mary
 - ◇ Residency program at Walden University
- Dr. Danielle Hornett, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College
 - ◇ Dean of student development attended Future Leaders Institute of the American Association of Community Colleges
 - ◇ Dean was promoted to interim president upon Dr. Hornett's retirement

Research Initiatives

- President Cheryl Crazy Bull, Northwest Indian College
 - ◇ Studied the "Restorative Change Model," which focuses on the revitalization of tribal knowledge and educational practices
 - ◇ Produced a manuscript for publication

- Dr. Richard Littlebear, Chief Dull Knife College
 - ◊ Reviewed how other TCUs integrated ecology, language, and cultural issues into the core curricula
- President Lionel Bordeaux, Sinte Gleska University
 - ◊ Developing a model for a National Tribal University
 - ◊ Held forums at eight events to gather information and promote collaboration

Leadership Development Conferences or Trainings

- Dr. David Yarlott Jr., Little Big Horn College
 - ◊ Harvard Crisis Leadership program
- Dr. Paul Robertson, Little Priest Tribal College
 - ◊ Global Mindset Development in Leadership Management at University of California
- Dr. Laurel Vermillion, Sitting Bull College
 - ◊ Higher Education Resource Services Women's Leadership Institute at University of Denver
- Dr. Sherry Allison, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
 - ◊ League for Innovation in the Community College's Executive Leadership Institute
- President Russell Mason, Jr., Fort Berthold Community College
 - ◊ Three financial conferences through the Falmouth Institute
- President Tom Shortbull, Oglala Lakota College
 - ◊ American Council on Education's Annual Conference
 - ◊ American Association of Community Colleges President's Academy Summer Institute
 - ◊ Jenzabar President's Summit
- President Melody Henry, Stone Child College
 - ◊ Council for Resource Development's Grant Management Workshop
 - ◊ Campus Technology's Annual Education Technology Conference
- Dr. Jim Davis, Turtle Mountain Community College
 - ◊ Two courses at The Fundraising School at the University of Indiana
 - ◊ Fundraising for Small Non-Profits
 - ◊ Developing Major Gifts
 - ◊ 16th Annual Foundation Leadership Forum sponsored by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

- Dr. Robert Martin, Institute of American Indian Arts
 - ◊ Higher Learning Commission’s regional forum on accreditation
 - ◊ Crucial Confrontations training for resolving human resources challenges

Visited and learned from other institutions of higher education

- Dr. Elmer Guy, Navajo Technical College
 - ◊ Visited University of New Zealand to learn how the Maori infused their curricula with Indigenous ways of knowing

- Dr. David Gipp, United Tribes Technical College
 - ◊ European Higher Education Study tour by the European Center for Strategic Management of Universities

- Dr. Carole Falcon-Chandler, Aaniiih Nakoda College
 - ◊ Visited four peer institutions to examine established fundraising programs
 - ◊ Hired fundraising consultant to train executive team

- Dr. Robert Martin, Institute of American Indian Arts
 - ◊ Turkish Cultural Foundation’s Academia Cultural Tour to develop cultural exchange program for faculty and students
 - ◊ Visited Mexican Indigenous Universities to implement art faculty and student exchange program

- Dr. Jim Davis, Turtle Mountain Community College
 - ◊ Visited Little Big Horn College to study the “Wisdom Leadership Project” model in order to implement Turtle Mountain Community College’s own project for training future leaders

- Dr. Ginny Carney, Leech Lake Tribal College
 - ◊ Visited culture-based colleges in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

- Dr. Paul Robertson, Little Priest Tribal College
 - ◊ Visited Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute to learn about their program review and assessment practices
 - ◊ Worked with three consultants to redesign the College’s organizational structure

World Indigenous People’s Conference on Education

Attended global conference to exchange knowledge on best practices in Indigenous higher education:

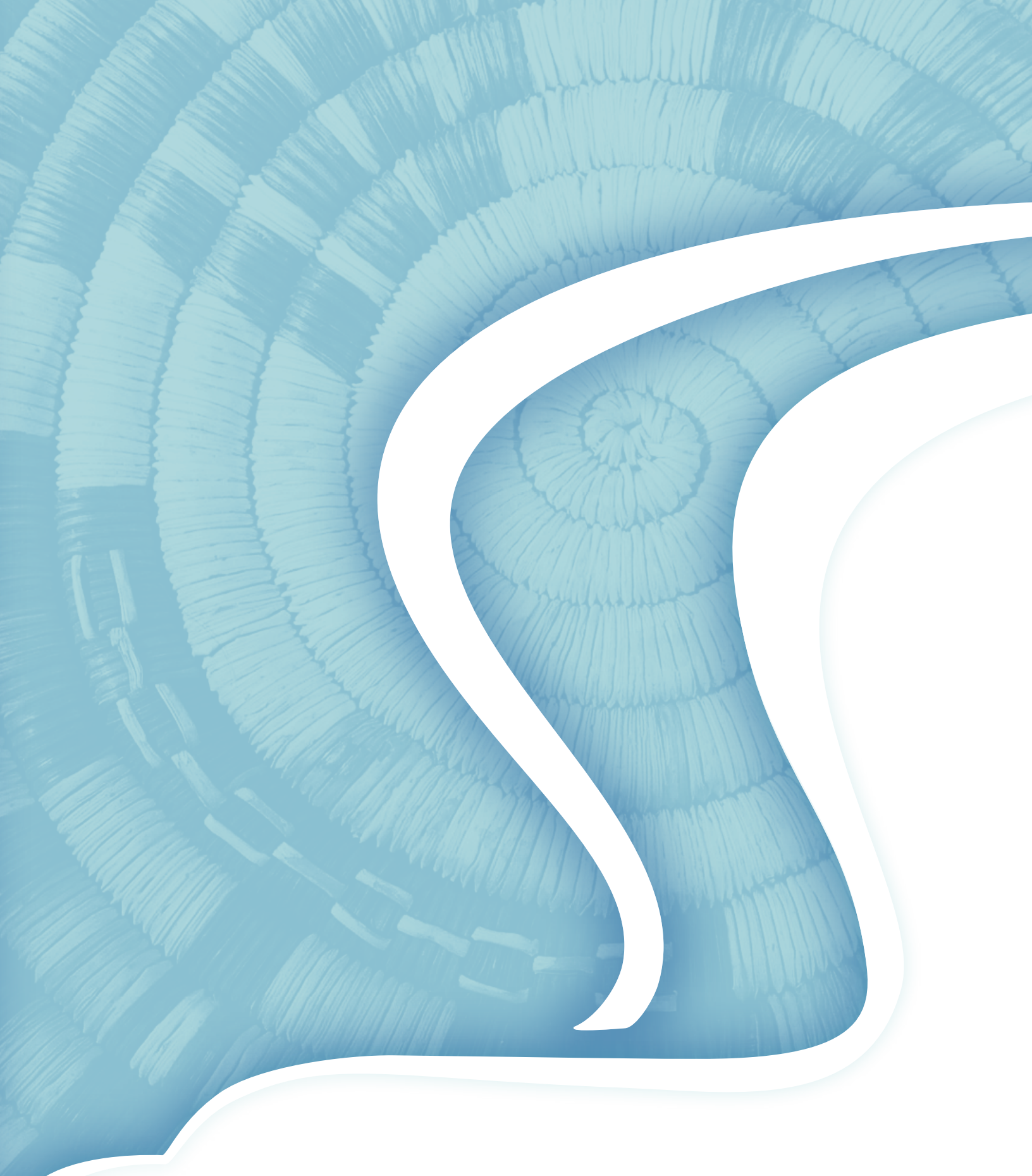
- Dr. Cynthia Lindquist, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
- President Cheryl Crazy Bull, Northwest Indian College
- Dr. Sherry Allison, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
- Dr. Elmer Guy, Navajo Technical College
- Dr. Richard Littlebear, Chief Dull Knife College
- Dr. David Yarlott Jr., Little Big Horn College

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Lilly Endowment Financial

Woksape Oyate Program Expenses	Original Budget	Final Budget 10-11-11	Actual	Remaining**
November 16, 2006 through June 12, 2012				
Grant No. 2006 1616-000				
Planning Grants	\$330,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$0
Consultants Fees and Expenses	\$120,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0
Awards	\$13,800,000	\$13,728,943	\$13,641,240	\$87,703
Scholarship Endowment*	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0
A*CF Program Support	\$2,250,000	\$2,301,057	\$2,301,057	\$0
Total Grant Budget	\$17,500,000	\$17,500,000	\$17,412,297	\$87,703
Woksape Oyate Endowment Performance (as of June 30, 2012)	Initial Investment	Investment Earnings	Disbursements	Total Endowment
Scholarship Endowment	\$1,000,000	\$80,357	\$53,045	\$1,027,312
A*CF Capacity Building Endowment	\$500,000	\$37,192	\$23,536	\$513,656

**All Program Monies were awarded. As of June 30, 2012 \$87,703 has been returned as unspent by the schools. These funds and any other returned funds will be added to the Lilly Scholarship Endowment, per approval of the Lilly Project Officer.



WOKSAPE OYATE
Wisdom of the People

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