



# Landscape of Early Childhood Development in Native Communities:

*Exploring Context, Challenges and Pathways Towards Investing in Impact and Innovation*



Report Prepared for the Better Way Foundation  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In April 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting (EHC) was contracted to conduct a scan of the landscape of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Indian Country. The objective of EHC's work in service of the Better Way Foundation was to provide research on the current landscape of ECD service provision in Native communities (with a focus on the Lakota, Winnebago, Blackfeet, Navajo, and Apache Nations), and analysis of key opportunities, challenges, and potential entry points for BWF support and engagement.

The authors of this plan, Crystal Echo Hawk (Pawnee), Marian Quinlan and Maggie Rice (Pawnee), gratefully thank all members of the Better Way Foundation's staff and Board of Directors, whose provision of organization materials, information, introductions to its Indian Catholic Mission School grantees and perspectives made possible this research and the recommendations put forth in this report possible. We applaud the foundation for its recognition of the great need in Native communities for children who are mentally and physically healthy, are able to contribute productively to their community, and are the culture-bearers for their tribe.

## **In particular, we would like to thank:**

- The following staff members: Mark Guy, Andreas Hipple and Mercedes Plendl;
- The Better Way Foundation Board of Directors;
- Robert Brave Heart, Sr., Red Cloud Indian School;
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- Tarajeane Yazzie, American Indian College Fund;
- Anihiwake Rose, National Indian Education Association;
- Patrice Kunesh, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis;
- Dr. Lamont Yazzie, Director of Educational Services at Navajo Head Start;
- Amy LaPointe, Co-Director of Educare Winnebago;
- Diane Wolfe, Director of Digital Learning Tools/Distance Learning Services, Educational Service Unit #2 of the State of Nebraska;
- Cynthia Weaver, Senior Associate, The Annie E. Casey Foundation; and
- Janet Welsh, Ph.D., Research Associate, Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development, Penn State University Extension.

EHC hopes this analysis and the subsequent recommendation will prove to be a springboard for the Better Way Foundation to both deepen and expand its engagement in Indian Country as well as be a guide to how it may leverage the many opportunities for impact to improve the quality of ECD programming and opportunities to help Native American children reach their full potential.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“Poverty breeds all types of social ills. Schools can’t fix poverty. We can equip children with knowledge and tools, prep them for college, but we can’t fix what is going on in the home, community, due to poverty, historical trauma and a complexity of issues with deep roots.”*

--Robert Brave Heart, Sr.  
Executive Vice President, Red Cloud Indian School

This wisdom from one of the country’s most respected educators of Native American children highlights one of the most important findings of this report from Echo Hawk Consulting to the Better Way Foundation:

That early childhood development (ECD) in Native American communities takes place in and must account for the complicated and often unfortunate circumstances of the communities themselves, and that to try to “fix” one element must often concurrently address other conditions.

Upon request of the Better Way Foundation during spring and summer 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting conducted primary and secondary research on the current landscape of ECD service provision in Native communities (with a focus on the Lakota, Winnebago, Blackfeet, Navajo, and Apache Nations), and analyzed key opportunities, challenges, and potential entry points for BWF support and engagement.

The following report is comprehensive and contains detailed information about the socio-economic, political and cultural challenges that Indian Country faces that shape the landscape of ECD programming, interventions, challenges and opportunities for impact. It also explores in depth, a range of promising models and insights from leading ECD experts working on the frontlines in Indian Country. Echo Hawk Consulting’s goal in the structure of this report is to provide a comprehensive resource guide as well as research to help inform next steps for Better Way’s ECD grantmaking strategy.

Toward that end, this report includes:

- Information on the context of Native communities;
- A summary of selected BWF-funded schools and their contexts;
- A summary of primary research conducted;
- A summary of secondary research conducted;
- A summary of other funders in the fields of ECD and/or Native Americans; and
- Recommendations and suggested next steps.

For entities like the Better Way Foundation, tribal sovereignty, the dark and complex history and treatment of tribes and Native peoples by the United States government and mainstream society, coupled with the daunting challenges facing Native Americans, can present many

barriers and complexities to working in Indian Country. However, as this report will outline, there are a number of opportunities and bright spots despite the challenges that afford the Better Way Foundation the opportunity to achieve impact with tribes, Native communities, Indian Country ECD champions, and innovators.

Native American children are at a severe disadvantage socially, economically, educationally, health-wise, infrastructure-ally (in terms of their homes and communities), and philanthropically. Native Americans overall are America's often-forgotten minority among minorities. Yet, the often tight-knit nature of their communities and the sense of positive identity that can be bolstered by their cultures offer tactics to support these children in unique ways.

The communities in which BWF-funded schools (or the schools themselves) may present vehicles for BWF to support Native American ECD. Native American ECD models in other communities and states may also offer productive points of intervention for BWF ECD funding.

In essence, we recommend that BWF's future efforts focus on:

- Building partnerships with BWF grantees and Native communities to identify and work toward needed systems-level changes;
- Create systems of co-learning with grantee partners, ensuring that evaluation processes and metrics are initially built into the work, so that all can draw honest and evidence-based conclusions about what is working (or not);
- Ensuring that community collaborations and organization capacity building are a primary focus, as those may be the fulcrum for success;
- Recognizing the critical nature of emphasizing Native cultures and languages in ECD programming, as a creating children's strong, early bond with their language and therefore their cultural identity will help them to become strong, grounded individuals with greater potential to succeed educationally as children and as productive members of their community as adults; and
- Reaching out to fellow funders to learn from their experiences and to proactively encourage their involvement in BWF's priority communities, because one funder simply cannot do it all.

We commend BWF for caring about those whom are too often passed-over philanthropically and by mainstream America, but whose lives and future contributions are too valuable and important to be ignored.

During the next phase of Echo Hawk Consulting's work with BWF, we will together identify the specific communities and models that may be worthy of BWF and have the best potential for making a difference in the lives of very young Native children.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on all that has been revealed and learned during the process of working with BWF, Echo Hawk Consulting has several recommendations on 1) how to frame BWF's future work with ECD in Native communities, 2) immediate next steps and 3) longer-term next steps.

In so doing, we seek to complement BWF's 2016-21 Building Systems for Young Children: An Early Childhood Development Program Strategy which lays out a framework for BWF's future ECD efforts.

## **Our recommendations are based on the answers to BWF's key questions:**

1. The landscape of engagement in and offerings of ECD among the five Native communities of interest ranges from Head Start (which may or may not include Early Head Start), with the involvement of BWF grantees ranging from full engagement to none at all.
2. The primary provider of ECD programs and services in most Native communities is the federally-funded Head Start Program which served 21,988 Native children in 2014 – serving only 4% of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children during the 2013-14 enrollment year. The total funding for Head Start in 26 states for AI/AN children as \$222,722,353, with the top five states for enrollment as Arizona, Alaska, New Mexico, Oklahoma and South Dakota.
3. The most critical gaps related to ECD in these communities are those directly related to ECD programs and schools-basic infrastructure, facilities and teacher/staff recruitment/retention/professional development – and relate to Native communities' context – children's mental health, parental and community engagement, and parental supports. By and large, the most significant gap is the lack of philanthropic funding directed toward Native communities for Native-driven solutions to community issues.
4. Some of the greatest areas of opportunity to address these gaps or build upon current efforts are the Native-driven and culturally-based models already in existence that have already proven successful in terms of serving children and their community.
5. What is realistic in terms of a small, private family foundation's ability to engage in these opportunities over the next five years would include BWF's role as an investor in cutting-edge models, its ability to evaluate and learn with its grantees and to share that learning with others, and its ability to convene and influence other philanthropic funders to begin to holistically address community needs supportive of ECD.
6. Some of the current innovators in holistic ECD program and service delivery in the U.S. whose models are applicable/adaptable to Native community settings are featured in this report's coverage of primary and secondary research. Echo Hawk Consulting found several Native-led, community-based examples of ECD programs, some of which are Head Start-related and others privately run, some in the communities of BWF-funded schools, and others elsewhere. Each one represents an opportunity for learning or investment or both.

7. The key linkages, partnerships, relationships, or contextual factors the Foundation be mindful of as it explores the potential of supporting ECD in these Native communities include:
- 1) Current BWF-funded schools may prove to be the initial intervention points for BWF ECD funding or may be springboards to developing other relationships for ECD funding.
  - 2) Nascent or existing Native community- and culturally-based ECD programs will provide inspiring models for investment and/or learning.
  - 3) Other philanthropic funders and government funding sources will need to be involved to help address the holistic context of Native communities in support of ECD efforts and BWF should engage in conversations regarding systems change approaches.
  - 4) The complex nature of Native communities and the overall lack of other significant investment mean that one cannot address one issue in a vacuum without also needing to bring along other elements in tandem.
  - 5) Each Native community is different, from its traditions, culture, language, circumstances and needs.
  - 6) The practice and preservation of Native languages and cultures is paramount to the successful development of Native children as productive and contributing youth, adults and community members.

#### **Recommendations for framing BWF's work:**

We first make the following recommendations for underlying values and structure for BWF's consideration for both how to operationalize the work internally and how to position BWF's externally with grantees. These best practices are based on Echo Hawk Consulting's extensive work both as a grantmaker in Indian Country and as a program developer.

- Build trust with the grantees to be able to share an honest exchange of what is working and not, to identify capacity building needs, and to help them to secure need capacity building resources;
- Work with grantees to define evaluation metrics that reflect their measures of progress and success alongside standardized measures important to the Better Way Foundation. As stated in the 2016-12 Strategy document, "Our partners and the communities in which we work can and should be part of the discussion when we evaluate systems change."
- Ensure community control and engagement by investing in community-led and –based institutions;
- Prioritize models that have productive institutional, community and family partnerships that will address children's holistic needs in early childhood;
- Understand there are no real "best practices" in Indian Country that have been fully documented. Be willing to invest in emerging and promising models as well as invest in the capacity for grantees to document and evaluate their work to promote learning that is beneficial for the grantee, BWF and the ECD field at large.



- Develop internal systems to document and learn from BWF-funded models to capture challenges/barriers, how they were addressed, partners involved, lessons learned and best practices in order to inform future Better Way Foundation funding.
- Perhaps most important, in the words of one of our interviewees, “Make long-term commitments to grantees and be partners and not just a funder.”

### **Areas for potential BWF investment:**

As presented in this report, Native communities require a holistic approach. In order to address one specific issue, it is often critical to bring in other (perhaps unforeseen) elements. Successful support for ECD for Native children will delve into the obvious realms of support for the schools and educators, but also into parental and community engagement, parental supports, mental health support for young children, infrastructure and facilities needs, and essential inclusion and emphasis on Native languages and cultures to ground the children with a positive sense of identity.

### **We encourage BWF to consider funding:**

- **COLLABORATION, NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS:** Community-driven partnerships of diverse stakeholders will play a critical role in ensuring the success of community-based ECD programs and in ensuring that children and their parents have the support necessary for the children’s success. Applicants may be encouraged to develop community collaborations that could be supported by BWF and that would offer new approaches to tackling tough issues around teacher retention, living wages, family engagement and systems approaches. BWF’s prioritization of applicants’ and grantees’ development of partnerships could affect broader community development efforts and holistic ECD approaches. Specifically, BWF could:
  - Invest in supporting community and inter-agency collaboration to leverage all needed community resources to support ECD programs and address the range of socio-economic needs and challenges that children and families face.
  - Consider funding more than one grantee in a community, as appropriate to the local ECD needs and programs/opportunities.
- **TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION:** Provide resources for grantees to invest in recruiting and retaining quality staff, capacity building for more competitive salaries and ensuring professional development opportunities.
- **NATIVE LANGUAGE & CULTURE:** Ensure that Native cultures and languages are a strong focus of funded programs that includes curriculum development, teacher training, parent and community engagement.
- **PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING:** Support planning grants and feasibility studies for ECD development, and support capacity building as needed for grantees.
- **MENTAL HEALTH:** Invest in supporting mental health needs of children in addition to academic, social and emotional development.
- **FACILITIES:** Consider investing in resources to support facility improvements, leasing or building new facilities.

**Besides project-support grants, we encourage BWF to consider:**

- **GENERAL OPERATING** to invest in critical resources.
- **SYSTEMS APPROACHES** to invest in bringing together diverse stakeholders within the communities served, regionally and nationally to create a space for collaboration, sharing and leveraging resources and thinking outside of the box in how best to advance not only promising ECD programming but to address the serious barriers and challenges to the well-being of Native children and families.
- **PLACE-BASED WORK:** Pine Ridge Indian Reservation would be ripe to test a focused, place-based approach with at least three grantees in the current pipeline (Red Cloud Indian School, Lakota Immersion Day Care/Thunder Valley and Oglala Lakota College Head Start Program). The upcoming convening in September at Pine Ridge could help to define what a focused place-based initiative could look like at Pine Ridge. New Mexico could also become another possible candidate for a place-based strategy as well depending on the outcome of the planned BWF site visit in October.
- **PILOTING COMPETITIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS** to address major barriers such as teacher recruitment and retention in the effort to foster new ideas and innovation.
- **MULTI-YEAR GRANTS** to truly support changes that have a chance to be sustainable and to encourage their institutionalization within the community.

# DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

Echo Hawk Consulting is very pleased to share initial results of our research and early Native American childhood development issue scan with the Better Way Foundation. We sincerely thank Andreas Hipple and Mark Guy for facilitating our relationships with the schools and for their guidance in this project.

## **Beginning in May through August, our process has involved:**

- One site visit to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in western South Dakota;
- Interviews with key Indian Country and philanthropic early childhood development (ECD) stakeholders;
- Research on issues facing Native American children and early childhood development;
- Research on best ECD practices in Indian Country; and
- Research on trends in philanthropy regarding ECD in Native communities.

## **Our work is framed around answering five questions:**

1. What is the landscape of engagement in and offerings of ECD among the five Native communities of interest?
2. Who are currently the primary providers of ECD programs and services and how are they funded?
3. What are the most critical gaps related to ECD in these communities?
4. What are some of the greatest areas of opportunity to address these gaps or build upon current efforts? What is realistic in terms of a small, private family foundation's ability to engage in these opportunities over the next five years?
5. Who are some of the current innovators in holistic ECD program and service delivery in the US and how might their models be applicable/adaptable to Native community settings?
6. What key linkages, partnerships, relationships, or contextual factors should the Foundation be mindful of as it explores the potential of supporting ECD in these Native communities?

## **What has been accomplished:**

- Review of five BWF-funded schools and preliminary recommendations made on potential partner communities for future funding;
- One site visit to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in western South Dakota (to Oglala Lakota College, Lakota Immersion Day Care, Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, and Red Cloud Indian School);
- Two conference calls with representatives of St. Michael's School in Arizona;
- Research on issues facing Native American children and early childhood development;
- Research on Native American children's context on the Navajo Reservation and Pine Ridge Indian Reservation;
- Call with Ahniwake Rose, Executive Director, National Indian Education Association, ECD policy issues in Indian Country;
- Call with Alvin Warren, New Mexico Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Kellogg-funded ECD programs in New Mexico, Navajo Nation;

- Research calls to Navajo Head Start, Educare Winnebago and a U.S. Department of Education grantee serving the Winnebago community;
- Call with Tarajeau Yazzie, Co-Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the American Indian College Fund and Senior Program Officer for early childhood education initiatives, Restorative Teachings: A Tribal College and University Collaborative to Strengthen Systems of Care and Learning with Native Families and Children;
- Three calls with Patrice Kunesh and staff from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis on Early Childhood Development in Indian Country;
- Two calls with Cynthia Weaver, Program Officer, Annie E. Casey Foundation and staff from the Tribal REDI (*Research-based, Developmentally Informed*) Project;
- Research on ECD best practices and learning in Indian Country;
- Research on private foundations funding ECD; and
- Preliminary recommendations made to BWF on criteria for successful grantee partners and for Better Way Foundation engagement with grantees.

# CONTEXT OF NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN'S ISSUES

For a multitude of complex and historic reasons, most Native American children begin their lives disadvantaged from Day One, whether they live on reservations or in urban areas. Native children are facing the biggest disparities in terms of health, income, education, access to basic services and opportunities than any other population in the U.S. Native Americans consistently score the lowest on almost every social indicator in the country.

The facts that a) there is a severe lack of data on Native Americans' vast needs, b) that Native Americans rarely have a seat at the table in the development of policies, institutions and systems that impact them and c) that the near-invisibility of Native peoples in mainstream society have compounded historic injustices, marginalization, disparities and underdevelopment that tribes and Native American communities have struggled with and continue to face.

In order to better understand the opportunity that the Better Way Foundation has to build upon its commitment to Native Americans, their children and educational opportunities, it is important to understand the context and trends that shape the lives and issues facing Native American children and early childhood development.

## Demographic Trends

- In 2010, 5.2 million people, or 1.7% of the U.S. population, identified as American Indian/Alaska Native alone or in combination with other races, while 0.9% identified as American Indian/Alaska Native alone. While the overall U.S. population grew about 9.7% between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of the U.S. population identifying as American Indian/Alaska Native alone or in combination with other races, grew by 27% since the 2000 census.<sup>1</sup> After enormous loss of life since contact with non-Indians, the Indian Country population is growing again.
- In 2013, there were 14 states with more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Native residents: California, Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, Washington, New York, North Carolina, Florida, Alaska, Michigan, Oregon, Colorado and Minnesota;<sup>2</sup> and
- In 2013, the states with the highest percentage of American Indian and Alaska Native population were Alaska (14.3%), followed by Oklahoma (7.5%), New Mexico (9.1%), South Dakota (8.5%), and Montana (6.8%).<sup>3</sup>

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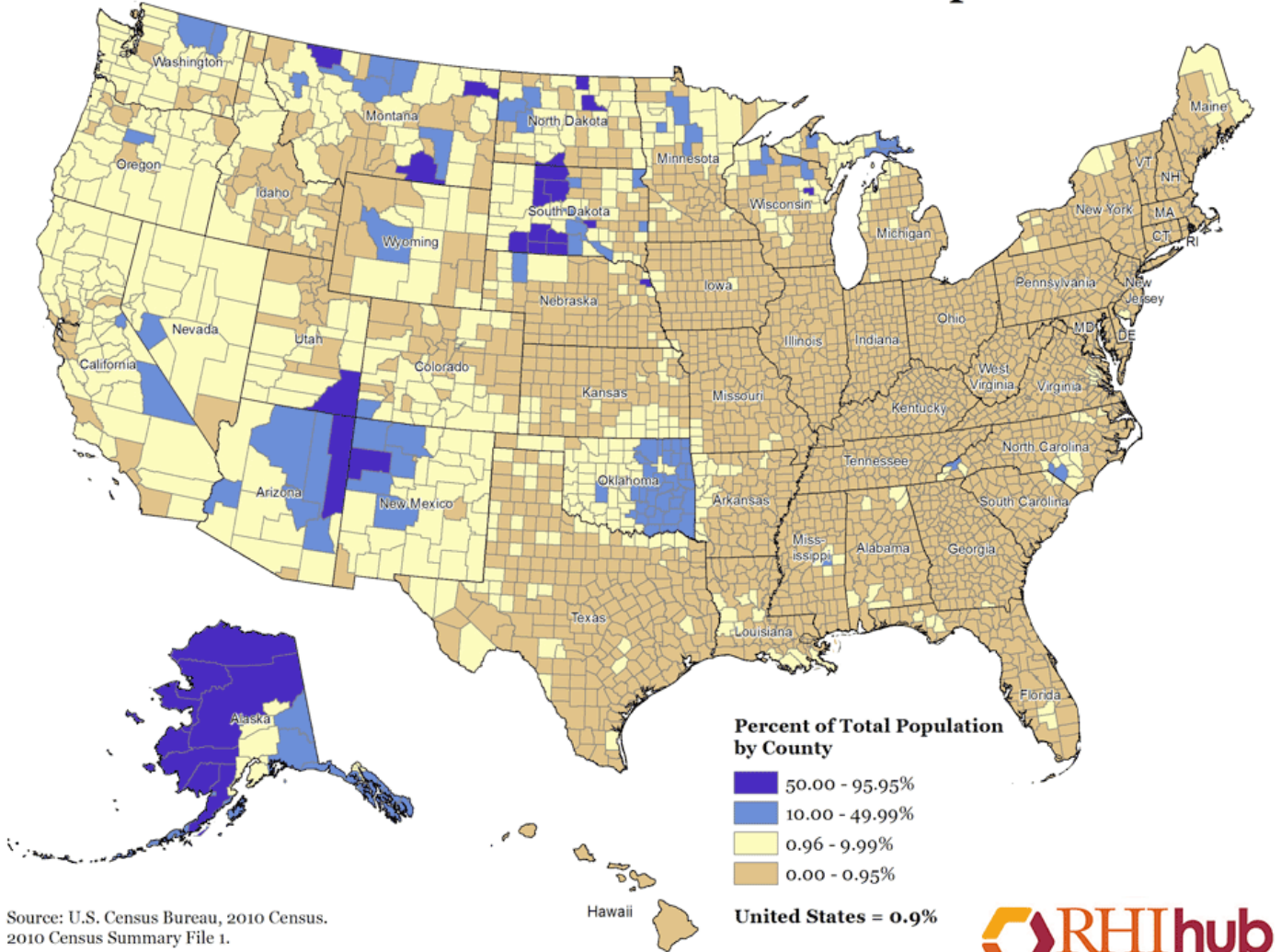
<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau. 2010 American Community Survey for the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population. Data source: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. Retrieved on November 2014 from United Census Bureau – Facts for Features – American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month: November 2011:

[https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/cb11-ff22.html](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff22.html).

<sup>2</sup> 2010 Census Shows Nearly Half of American Indians and Alaska Natives Report Multiple Races, U.S. Census Bureau, (January 2012), [https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010\\_census/cb12-cn06.html](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb12-cn06.html)

<sup>3</sup> 2010 Census Shows Nearly Half of American Indians and Alaska Natives Report Multiple Races, U.S. Census Bureau, (January 2012), [https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010\\_census/cb12-cn06.html](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb12-cn06.html)

# American Indian and Alaska Native Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, 2010 Census Summary File 1.

Note: Alaska and Hawaii not shown to scale

Chart courtesy of the Rural Health Information Hub: [https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-maps/mapfiles/american-indian-alaskan-native-population.jpg?utm\\_source=outreach&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=minoritymaps](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-maps/mapfiles/american-indian-alaskan-native-population.jpg?utm_source=outreach&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=minoritymaps)

- 72% of all American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN), and 78% of all AI/ AN children live in cities.<sup>4</sup>

And Native people have been experiencing a high birth rate. About 32% of Natives are under the age of 18 compared to only 24% of the total U.S. population. Some states have even higher proportions of young Native people. For example, in South Dakota nearly 40% of the 71,817 American Indians are under 18 years old.<sup>5</sup>

### **Poverty**

High unemployment and high rates of poverty in Native communities contribute to substandard housing, poor health (often attributable to preventable, diet-related diseases) and food insecurity.

According to the U.S. Census:

- In 2010, the real per-capita income for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/ANs) was \$17,688 compared to total U.S. for all races at \$27,334; and
- The national poverty rate for AI/ANs of 19.1 percent, 1½ times the national average.

22% of Native families live on American Indian reservations or trust land.<sup>6</sup> In 2010, 28.4% of the American Indian/Alaska Native population was living below the poverty line.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> NUIFC National Policy Report: “Making the Invisible Visible: A Policy Blueprint for Urban Indian America,” National Urban Indian Family Coalition, pg. 6, June 2015, [http://nuifc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/NUIFC\\_digital\\_Bookplain.pdf](http://nuifc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/NUIFC_digital_Bookplain.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Id.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2010 American Community Survey for the American Indian/Alaska Native alone population.

[https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/cb11-ff22.html](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff22.html). (Accessed 26 Aug 2016)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

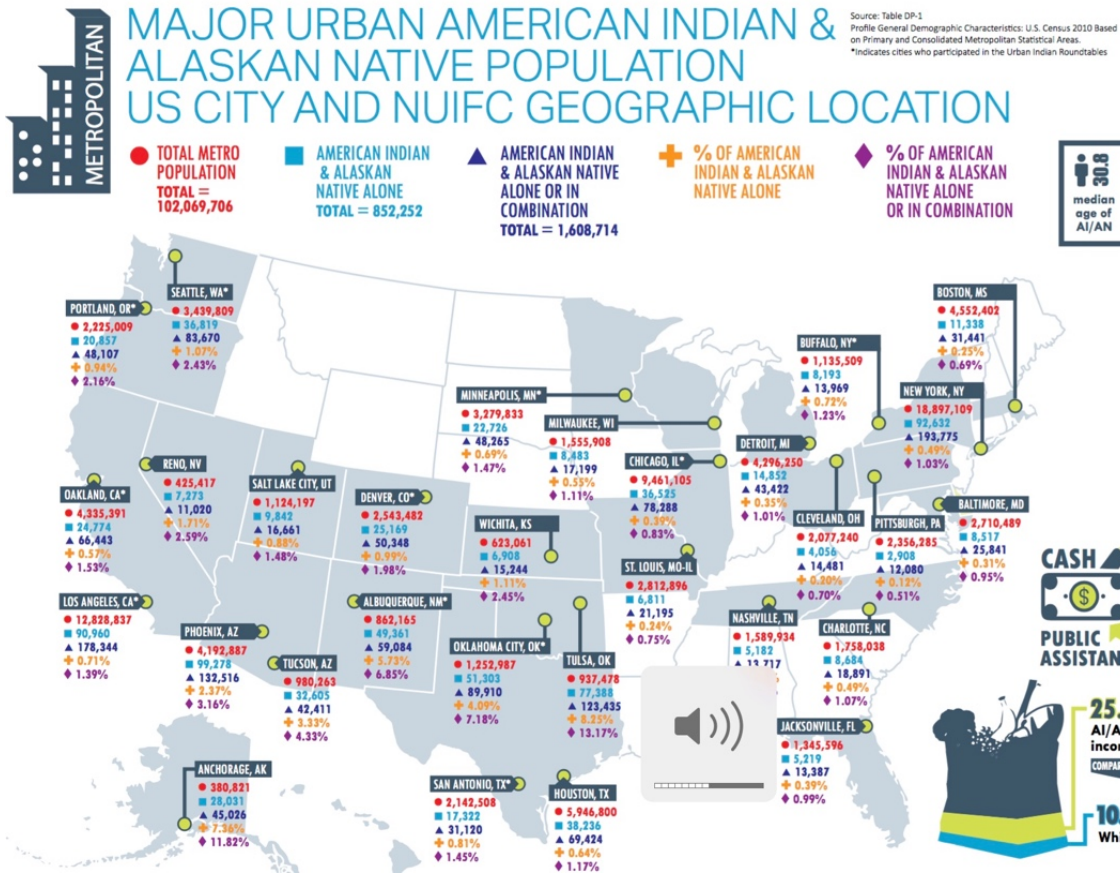


Chart Courtesy of NUIFC National Policy Report: "Making the Invisible Visible: A Policy Blueprint for Urban Indian America," National Urban Indian Family Coalition, pg. 6, June 2015



Younger Native Americans are more subject to poverty than the mainstream population. According to the U.S. Census, while 32.1% of AI/AN individuals below the poverty level are under the age of 18, only 17.8% of White (non-Hispanic) individuals under the age of 18 are below the poverty level.

More than 1 in 3 (39 percent) of AI/AN children under the age of 5 live in poverty, nearly twice the national average (21 percent).<sup>8</sup>

### Housing

- Over 90,000 American Indian families are homeless or under-housed;<sup>9</sup>
- Over 30% of American Indian families live in overcrowded housing and 18% are severely overcrowded with 25-30 individuals sharing a single home. These rates are over six times the national average;<sup>10</sup> and
- On reservations, 13 percent of residents lack complete plumbing facilities, while 9.2 percent lack complete kitchen facilities. 22.8 percent lack phone service.<sup>11</sup>

### Insufficient Education Rates

Native Americans face grave challenges in the area of education.

- About three out of every ten Native American students drop out before graduating from high school both on reservations and in cities;<sup>12</sup>
- Native American adults achieve lower levels of education than the national average;<sup>13</sup> and
- In 2012, 39% of Native American students started in 2005 as first-time, full-time students at 4-year institutions graduated, compared to 60% of White students.<sup>14</sup>

**Native kindergarten students are held back at nearly twice the rate of White kindergarten students.**

<sup>8</sup> Data from the 2008-2012 Amer. Community Survey 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Dep't of Commerce (Dec. 17, 2013) [hereinafter 2008-2012 ACS].

<sup>9</sup> Robert T. Coulter, *Include the Poor and Indigenous in Eradication of Poverty*, Indian Law Resource Center, (October 2014), <http://www.equalvoiceforfamilies.org/include-the-poor-and-indigenous-in-eradication-of-poverty/#sthash.RGLGWUxl.dpuf>

<sup>10</sup> *Reservation poverty*, Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation\\_poverty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation_poverty)

<sup>11</sup> Red Cloud Indian School, *The Reservation*. 2016. <http://www.redcloudschool.org/reservation>. Accessed 26 Aug 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Jon Reyhner, *Plans for Dropout Prevention and Special School Support Services for American Indian and Alaska Native Students*, U.S. Department of Education's Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, (March 2015), <http://www2.nau.edu/~jar/INAR.html> and Lesli A. Maxwell, *Education in Indian Country: Running in Place*, Education Week, (December 2013), <http://www.edweek.org/ew/projects/2013/native-american-education/running-in-place.html>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

The roots of these daunting statistics can be seen in the disparities that exist with young Native children.

In the areas of **motor and cognitive skill development**:<sup>15</sup>

- At age 2, 74 percent of AI/AN children demonstrated receptive vocabulary, compared to 84 percent of all children.
- 49 percent of AI/AN children demonstrated expressive vocabulary, compared to 64 percent of all children.
- 25 percent demonstrated listening comprehension 36 percent of all children.
- 21 percent demonstrated matching skills compared to 32 percent of all children.
- 1 percent demonstrated early counting skills compared to 4 percent of all children.
- At 4 years of age, a smaller percentage of AI/AN children demonstrated language, literacy, mathematics, and color identification skills compared to all children.

#### **Other Educational Factors:**

Native children enter some type of child care early in their lives.<sup>16</sup>

- In 2001, 46 percent of AI/AN children 9 months of age were in some kind a regular non-parental child care arrangements.
- In 2004, 43 percent of 2-year-old AI/ANs were in child care.
- In 2004, 80 percent of 4-year-old AI/ANs in child care.

By the time they enter school, many Native children are already behind in relation to their non-Native peers due to lack of access/participation in ECD programming.<sup>17</sup> Native kindergarten students are held back at nearly twice the rate of White kindergarten students.

Getting children to school is another logistical issue. The vast distances encompassed by Native communities mean that Native students face geographical barriers that most youth do not. Native students often live in isolated, rural areas and travel distances of up to 320 miles to and from school<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> National Indian Education Association, *Native Nations and American Schools: The History of Natives in the American Education System*. <http://www.niea.org/our-story/history/native-101/>. Accessed 29 Aug 2016.

<sup>16</sup> National Indian Education Association, *Native Nations and American Schools: The History of Natives in the American Education System*. <http://www.niea.org/our-story/history/native-101/>. Accessed 29 Aug 2016.

<sup>17</sup> Office For Civil Rights, U.S. Dep T Of Educ., Issue Brief No. 2, Data Snapshot: Early Childhood Education 1 (March 2014), at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-early-learning-snapshot.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Native Nations in American Schools: The History of Natives in the American Education System. Produced by the National Indian Education Association. <http://www.niea.org/our-story/history/native-101/>

The poor (and sometimes nonexistent) infrastructure in Native communities is notorious. 33 percent of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools were in 'poor' condition by the Government Accountability Office in 2003. In 2011, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) estimated that fixes would cost \$1.3 billion. <sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup>

The AI/AN high school graduation rate is 67 percent<sup>19</sup>, the lowest of any racial/ethnic demographic group across all schools. And the most recent Department of Education data indicate that the BIE schools fare even worse, with a graduation rate of 53 percent, compared to a national average of 80 percent.<sup>20</sup>

However, the BIA and underdevelopment of reservation school systems is not only to blame for the poor academic outcomes for Native American children. Ninety-eight percent of Native children attend public schools across the U.S. These public school systems seem to be also failing Native American children. Discrimination and lack of cultural competency of teachers contribute to this as do the challenges that Native American face in their homes and communities that are indicated above as well.

According to the 2014 Native Youth Report from the Executive Office of the President<sup>21</sup>, there are several factors for Native students' low academic achievement and educational attainment:

- Continued Lack of Genuine Tribal Control over students' education;
- Lack of Comprehensive Student Support to address needs related to mental health, nutrition, wellness, substance abuse, family life issues, exposure to bullying and violence, housing shortages, etc.
- Challenges in Recruiting and Retaining Highly Effective Teachers and School Leaders: uncompetitive salaries, isolated rural settings, tough working conditions, few amenities, lack of job opportunities for spouses, and marginal housing create difficulties in securing and keeping professional staff.
- Lack of Native Languages and Cultures in School: Students who learn English and continue to develop their Native language have higher academic achievement in later years than students who learn English at the expense of their first language.<sup>22</sup>

## Health Disparities

Natives continue to suffer from serious health problems. The average life expectancy for

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<sup>19</sup> Indian Students in Public Schools- Cultivating the Next Generation: Hearing on Indian Education Before the S. Comm. on Indian Affairs, 113th Cong. (2014) (testimony of William Mendoza, Exec. Dir., White House Initiative on Am. Indian and Alaska Native Educ.).

<sup>20</sup> See Marie C. Stetser & Robert Stillwell, U.S. Dep't of Educ., Nat'l Ctr. for Educ. Stat., Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates And Event Dropout Rates: School Years 2010-11 and 2011-12 (2014), available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014391.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/20141129nativeyouthreport\\_final.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/20141129nativeyouthreport_final.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Wong-Fillmore, L. "When Learning a Second Language Means Losing the First," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* (1991) 6, 323, 346.

American Indians has improved yet still trails that of other Americans by almost 5 years.<sup>23</sup> Health disparities in Indian Country outpace other populations in the U.S. Current data from the National Congress of American Indian's Center for Diabetes Research and Policy Research Center, in addition to other relevant sources, reflects the following:

- According to the Indian Health Clinical Reporting System, over 80% of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) adults ages 20 to 74 are overweight or obese; among children and youth, between 45 % and 51 % are not at a healthy weight;<sup>24</sup>
- Childhood obesity rates often exceed 50% in tribal communities;<sup>25</sup>
- Obesity rates are twice as high for American Indian preschoolers than other race and ethnic populations;<sup>26</sup>
- According to these trends, 1 out of 2 American Indian children will develop type 2 diabetes; and
- The issues related to poor health, diabetes and obesity translate into oral health, maternal and child health and mental health concerns, and also translate into higher incidence of cancer, heart disease and chronic diseases related to obesity and diabetes, including amputations, strokes, and related health trauma.<sup>27</sup>

**The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights found that Native Americans lag 20-25 years behind the general population in health status, representing the most severe unmet health care needs of any group in the U.S.**

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<sup>23</sup> 2010, HHS Indian Health Disparities Fact Sheet.

<sup>24</sup> *Over 80 Percent Of American Indian And Alaska Native Adults Are Overweight Or Obese*, Healthy Weight For Life, Indian Health Service, [https://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight/index.cfm?module=dsp\\_hw\\_trend](https://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight/index.cfm?module=dsp_hw_trend)

<sup>25</sup> A number of tribal communities in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Minnesota and other states have self-reported childhood obesity rates to exceed 50% with applications to funders. Moreover, according to a 2006-2008 Indian Health Service BMI report for New Mexico Pueblos, 61% of Native American children between the ages of 2-19 years were reported to be overweight/obese.

<sup>26</sup> Anderson and Whitaker 2009; See also, <http://frac.org/initiatives/hunger-and-obesity/obesity-in-the-us/>.

<sup>27</sup> Oral Health: Haring, R. C., Skye, Jr., W., Battleson, B. L., Wampler, N., Brings-Him-Back-Janis, M., Muramoto, M. (2014) "Preventing dentures and putting aside the fry bread: A systematic review of micro, mezzo, and macro conditions for dental health and obesity interventions for American Indian youth." *Journal of Indigenous Social Development* (accepted, 2014); Haring, R. C.; Skye, Jr., W. Battleson, B.; Brings-Him-Back-Janis, M.; Teufel-Shone, N. (2014). "Teeth and heavyset kids: Intervention similarities between childhood obesity and oral health interventions within American Indian societies." *Journal of Indigenous Research* 3(1), 5, 1-24. Maternal Health: Dabelea, D. and Crume, T. (2011). "Maternal Environment and the Transgenerational Cycle of Obesity and Diabetes." *Diabetes* 60 (7), pp. 1849-1855. Mental Health: Bell, R.A.; Smith, S.; Arcury, T.; Snively, B.; Stafford, J.; and Quandt, S. (2005). "Prevalence and Correlates of Depressive Symptoms Among Rural Older African Americans, American

The Indian Health Service is the primary and largest health care provider for many American Indians, yet its resources are unable to meet the immense needs of the people as indicated above by these alarming statistics. About 55% of American Indians rely on the Indian Health Service for medical care.<sup>28</sup> Yet, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act only meets about 60% of their health needs.<sup>29</sup> Due to underfunding, Indian Health Service facilities are crisis-driven and leave a wide gap in adequate and preventative health care for many American Indians on the reservations. Pharmacies and doctor's offices outside of hospitals are completely non-existent in some communities.

### **Historical Trauma and Racism: Connections to Health Disparities**

Leading researchers increasingly point to the role of historical trauma and racism as significant factors in the health of Native peoples and current status of Native Americans.<sup>30</sup> Historical trauma has manifested through the displacement from ancestral homelands, loss of spiritual ties to the land, population loss, “cultural genocide” including the mass killing of millions of Native peoples through colonization, forced relocation of tribes and the removal of Native children forced to attend Boarding Schools where they were assimilated in mission schools mandating that they eradicate their traditional languages, cultural and spiritual lifeways.

Historical trauma, substance and alcohol abuse, and lack of opportunity contribute to high rates of suicide and accident-related deaths. Suicide is the second leading cause of death—2.5 times the national rate—for Native youth in the 15 to 24 year old age group.<sup>31</sup> From 2005 to 2009, the unintentional injury death rate for AI/AN people was 2.4 times higher than for Whites.<sup>32</sup>

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has found that Native Americans lag 20-25 years behind the general population in health status, representing the most severe unmet health care needs of any group in the U.S. Further study is needed to understand the socio-economic, cultural and human costs of these disparities to Indian Country.<sup>33</sup>

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Indians, and Whites with Diabetes.” *Diabetes Care* 28 (4), pp. 823-829; See also, “Diabetes and Depression Among American Indian and Alaska Native Elders”

<sup>28</sup> 2006, Indian Health Facts.

<sup>29</sup> 2003, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

<sup>30</sup> Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Ph.D. and Lemyra M. DeBruyn, Ph.D., “The American Indian Holocaust: Healing Historical Unresolved Grief,” American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research, Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health Colorado School of Public Health/University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus ([www.ucdenver.edu/caianh](http://www.ucdenver.edu/caianh))

<sup>31</sup> Pamela Hyde, Adm’r, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Servs. Admin., U.S. Dep’t of Health & Human Services, Behavioral Health and Tribal Communities (Feb. 8, 2011), at <http://www.store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA11-PHYDE020811/SMA11-PHYDE020811.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> *Unintentional Injury Mortality Among American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States, 1990–2009*. American Journal of Public Health, June 2014.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4035871/>

<sup>33</sup> *A Quiet Crisis: Federal Funding and Unmet Needs in Indian Country*, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (2003), <http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/na0703/na0204.pdf>

All these factors contribute to the fact that Native children’s health and development are clearly compromised.

### **Federal Funding and Initiatives for Tribes and Native American Children and Youth**

Numerous treaties and laws have created a fundamental contract or “trust responsibility” between tribal nations and the United States: Tribes ceded millions of acres of land that made the United States what it is today, and in return tribes have the right of continued self-government, and to exist as distinct peoples on their own lands. Part of this trust responsibility includes basic governmental services in Indian Country, funding for which is appropriated in the discretionary portion of the federal budget. As governments, tribes must deliver a wide range of critical services, such as education, workforce development, and first-responder and public safety services to their citizens. The federal budget for tribal governmental services reflects the extent to which the United States honors its promises to Indian people.<sup>34</sup>

Across all federal funding authorities, there are only a few specific funding programs with set-asides for Tribes or created specifically for Tribal members. While funding levels have improved under the Obama Administration, government funding levels to address unmet needs in Indian Country are still woefully inadequate.

According to the National Urban Indian Family Coalition, while funding opportunities for tribes is relatively limited, the federal government has also been limited in support of urban AI/IN, despite its own recommendations to do so. Congress commissioned two reports on the status of rural and urban non-reservation AI/ AN, one in 1928 and one in 1976. The 1976 report concluded that the federal government had not met their responsibility to provide for the undeniable needs of urban AI/AN. Furthermore, the 1976 report stated that the federal government had created a national split between urban and reservation AI/AN by forcing them to compete for funding from a very limited pool of resources.<sup>35</sup>

### **Generation Indigenous**

In January 2015, President Obama announced that his administration will seek \$1 billion for his “Generation Indigenous Initiative” that seeks to improve opportunities and wellbeing of Native youth. A substantial investment has been made to date to improve reservation schools, increase academic opportunities and mental health services for Native American children. While this historic investment should be applauded, it is only a fraction of what is needed to address the significant challenges Native youth face today as they experience the highest rates of obesity, suicide, drop-out rates and poverty of any youth population in the U.S.

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<sup>34</sup> *Fiscal Year 2015 Indian Country Budget Request: An Honorable Budget for Indian Country*, National Congress of American Indians, <http://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai-publications/indian-country-budget-request/fy2015>

<sup>35</sup> NUIFC National Policy Report: “Making the Invisible Visible: A Policy Blueprint for Urban Indian America,” National Urban Indian Family Coalition, pg. 9, June 2015, [http://nuifc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/NUIFC\\_digital\\_Bookplain.pdf](http://nuifc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/NUIFC_digital_Bookplain.pdf)

## Philanthropy

A 2011 report by Native Americans in Philanthropy and the Foundation Center revealed that only 0.3% of all foundation giving in the U.S. is invested in Native Americans. However, in grants awarded, the majority of these dollars go to non-Native organizations working on “Native American issues.” Total grantmaking benefitting Native Americans by foundations in 2009 was approximately \$68 million. Giving is not widespread across all foundations; rather is it generated consistently from a small group of large, midsize and small funders.<sup>36</sup> In 2012, the Foundation Center reported that none of the top 50 grant recipients for ethnic and racial minorities across the country were organizations led by Native Americans or primarily serving Native Americans.

Despite the underinvestment of mainstream philanthropy in Native Americans, Tribal Philanthropy is on the rise due in large part to the success that some Tribes have achieved through Indian gaming. For example, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community has provided more than \$325 million in charitable giving and loaned more than \$500 million to fellow tribes since the 1990s.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, it is believed other gaming tribes have contributed over \$200 million in philanthropic donations to Native and non-Native nonprofits organizations across the United States since the advent of Indian Gaming. However, it must be noted that there is only a handful of tribes with the types of revenues that make this level of charitable giving possible. The majority of tribes do not have significant enough gaming revenues to warrant large amounts of charitable giving.<sup>38</sup>

## Dispelling the Myths of Indian Gaming

Tribal gaming has recently brought significant revenues to some tribes. Tribal gaming revenues totaled \$28.3 billion dollars in fiscal year 2013.<sup>39</sup> Tribal gaming revenue is generated at 479 gaming facilities operated by 244 Indian tribes in 28 states.<sup>40</sup> In 2013, tribal gaming generated

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<sup>36</sup> The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) ranked as the top funder by grant dollars supporting American Indian causes in 2009, with 23 grants totaling \$10.2 million. Over the past ten years, two foundations have ranked as the top funder of American Indians more than once: RWJF (four times) and the Ford Foundation (three times).

<sup>37</sup> *Seeds of Native Health: Campaign Partners*, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (March 2015), <http://seedsofnativehealth.org/partners/>

<sup>38</sup> *Context Is Everything: Reflections On Strengthening Partnerships Between the Philanthropic Community and Native Americans*, One Fire Development, Inc. (2009), p. 11

<sup>39</sup> Press Release, Nat’l Indian Gaming Comm’n National Indian Gaming Commission Announces Indian Gaming Revenues for 2013 (July 21, 2014), available at [http://www.nigc.gov/Media/Press\\_Releases/2014\\_Press\\_Releases/PR-226\\_07-2014.aspx](http://www.nigc.gov/Media/Press_Releases/2014_Press_Releases/PR-226_07-2014.aspx)

<sup>40</sup> Brian Pempus, U.S. Tribal Gaming Revenue Reaches New Record, Cardplayer.com, March 30, 2015, available at <http://www.cardplayer.com/poker-news/18610-u-s-tribal-gaming-revenue-reaches-new-record>, citing Alan Meister, Casino City Annual Indian Gaming Report, see also, NIGC Tribal Gaming Revenues Chart, 2009-2013,

over \$13.6 billion for federal, state and local government budgets through compact and service agreements, indirect payment of employment, income, sales and other state taxes, and reduced general welfare payments.<sup>41</sup>

#### **Indian Gaming Facts in Brief:**

- Poverty is not countered, in contrast to popular belief, by Indian gaming operations;
- Of the 244 tribes that have casinos, only 25% give per capita payouts to individual members based on gaming revenues. Most tribes' membership is too large to provide per capita payments based on revenue and/or their gaming revenue is not significant enough for individual payments;<sup>42</sup>
- 75% of gaming Tribes devote all of their revenue to Tribal governmental services, economic and community development, neighboring communities and charitable purposes;<sup>43</sup> and
- According to ABC News, only 23 casinos are deemed highly successful in profit generation.<sup>44</sup>

#### **Tribal Sovereignty, Governments, Advocacy and Policy Change**

The modern federal policy of Tribal Self-Determination has ushered in more opportunities for tribal governments to address longstanding problems in their communities. Understanding that federal policies disproportionately impact tribal communities because of the status of Indian lands and the promise of health care, education, housing, and other programs for Indians, tribal leaders have become increasingly more engaged in the federal political and policy processes. As a result there is a growing trend and movement supported by tribal governments towards innovation and a return to traditional tribal knowledge to create positive, community-driven solutions to address long-standing challenges and disparities. These grassroots movements among tribal citizens and formal tribal government actions are making vast improvements to lives of Natives in their territories.

But to continue to promote this innovation and progress, federal and state laws and policies need to catch up to the realities of modern tribal life. States have traditionally been enemies of the tribes, constantly in competition for access to tribal lands and resources. In many places, this is changing, with states learning to work with tribes, and vice versa, to address their common interests.

In others, the states and tribes continue to battle over tribal and individual Indian rights.

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available at

[http://www.nigc.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=\\_15QAX4uZyA%3d&tabid=67](http://www.nigc.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=_15QAX4uZyA%3d&tabid=67).

<sup>41</sup> Ernest L. Stevens Jr., Indian Gaming Magazine, Indian Gaming Revenues Provide Favorable Benefits for Indian Country and Beyond, pg. 20, October 2014, available at

[http://www.indiangaming.com/istore/Oct14\\_SpeakOut.pdf](http://www.indiangaming.com/istore/Oct14_SpeakOut.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association, "Facts about Indian Gaming," <http://oiga.org/faqs/>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> "Casinos Not Paying Off for Indians: Indians See Little from \$8 Billion in Gambling Revenue," (2015), ABC News, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/print?id=95944>



Education is often one of the key issues of contention in many instances as a number of states with large Native populations still refuse to include tribal leaders and Indian education stakeholders in important conversations they are engaging in with other non-Native stakeholders regarding ECD and education policies, priorities, curriculum and resource allocations that impact Native children in public schools. This is despite the fact that tribes are increasingly contributing to their local school districts and helping to address state funding gaps in education. For example, Indian gaming has contributed \$1 billion to education in Oklahoma over the last 10 years according to a recent study.<sup>45</sup>

Despite these challenges, tribal leaders have been calling for tribal equity in ECD funding and programming. In 2015, the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC) published the report, “Making the Invisible Visible: A Policy Blueprint from Urban Indian America” that is based on roundtable discussions in 11 cities with urban Indian organizations, policymakers, and Native community members. Among other priorities, related to ECD, the report called for:

- Expanding and supporting early childhood programming for urban Native communities both at the federal and state level;
- Increasing the amount of Head Start and Early Head Start programs operated by urban Indian organizations and consider the inclusion of urban Indian organization into the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Region XI;
- Increasing support and training for the development of high quality Native family daycares in urban communities;
- Ensuring that organizations serving urban communities are eligible for federal and state opportunities (e.g. Indian Education Demonstration Grants which are designed to improve the education opportunities and achievement of preschool, elementary, and secondary school Indian children by developing, testing, and demonstrating effective services and programs); and
- Targeting and partnering with teacher education programs feeding urban districts to include issues related to Native people in their teacher preparation.

## Concluding thoughts

Native Americans and tribes face a myriad of deep-rooted and complex challenges brought about a history of genocide, forced relocation, assimilation, discrimination and marginalization. Understanding this context and how it shapes the lives of Native children and families, ECD programming, schools and other stakeholders is vital to charting a pathway forward.

Funders and potential external stakeholders need to ensure that they have reasonable expectations of what individual schools and ECD programs can achieve in limited time frames of grant cycles within the context of the great disparities and challenges that these entities are living and operating within. Nevertheless, while these challenges seem daunting, as this report

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<sup>45</sup> *American Indian gaming contributed \$1 billion to Oklahoma education over past decade, study shows*, Brianna Bailey, Daily Oklahoman, November 18, 2015, <http://roundhousetalk.com/2015/11/18/american-indian-gaming-contributed-1-billion-to-oklahoma-education-over-past-decade-study-shows/>

will demonstrate, there is exciting progress, innovation and bright spots with regard to ECD programming in different communities across Indian Country. Moreover, many of these promising models are also looking at innovative ways to forge partnerships and collaboration to leverage resources to address the challenges surrounding Native children, families and schools.

# SUMMARY OF FIVE BWF-FUNDED SCHOOLS AND THEIR LINKS TO ECD PROGRAMS/EFFORTS

The five schools funded by the Better Way Foundation that were reviewed by Echo Hawk Consulting were:

- St. Michael Indian School in Saint Michaels, AZ (located on the Navajo Nation Reservation);
- St. Augustine Indian Mission School in Winnebago, NE;
- St. Charles School in San Carlos, AZ;
- De La Salle Blackfeet School in Browning, MT; and
- Red Cloud Indian School, Inc. in Pine Ridge, SD.

With the intention of viewing a subset of the schools as a starting point to consider funding ECD in those communities, Echo Hawk Consulting reviewed each school's:

- Size of the annual budget;
- History of pre-K programs;
- Stability of staff and finances;
- Available infrastructure and supplies;
- School partnerships; and
- Other potential partnerships in the area.

The reference materials for these summaries were the grant proposals submitted to the schools to Better Way Foundation as well as documents and notes from the Better Way Foundation about the schools.

The following summaries the finding of each school's review, Better Way Foundation's funding to each school, and the economic context of the school's community.

[A summary of the primary research conducted in communities of selected BWF-funded schools will be presented in a following section of this report.]

## St. Michael Indian School (SMIS)

**Location:** Saint Michaels, AZ

**Size of annual budget:** \$2.5 million

**History of pre-k programs:** Included Junior Kindergarten for the first time during the 2015-2016 school year. Many years ago the school embarked on an early education program called Early Bird. Early Bird allowed for a few hours of instruction centered around teaching parents to teach at home and supplies were provided through grant funding. This program was instituted for a few years until funding ran out.

**Stability of staff, finances:** They have a Director of Development on staff (for 6 years). One full time employee focuses on grant writing and working major gift with foundations, corporations and major donors for all funding opportunities The President has been on board since June 2014. Principal has been with the school for five years. They have an endowment which they are growing. All plans (Strategic Plan, Five Year Facilities Plan, Retention & Recruitment Plan, Development Plan and Enrollment Plan) are in revision progress among board committees slated for this school year. SMIS had a deficit in this year's current fiscal year budget. This is in large part to the Southwest Indian Foundation (SWIF) not funding the school this year (which was not announced until after the school year began). Every past year, SWIF had funded \$340,000 and had been supporting SMIS for decades. This funding offset salaries of lay and religious staff and supported the difference between actual costs to educate a child at SMIS and what SMIS charges in tuition to families. SMIS is by no means in a dire situation. However, it has become top priority to seek other funding to recover from this loss.

**Infrastructure, supplies:** Recent grant funding and partnerships have allowed for outdated classroom spaces to be updated with SMART board technology and replacement of textbooks for the math and religion Kindergarten through 12th grade. The current building housing Junior Kindergarten was renovated to meet all safety and compliance codes and included installing a new floor. Plans to continue installing outside playground equipment are still in the works.

**School Partnerships:** SMIS keeps in direct contact with First Things First. First Things First creates a family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all Arizona's children birth through age five. SMIS has been in contact with the Navajo Nation Head Start (preschool) Program. Partnerships with AdvancED and Western Catholic Educational Association for accreditation will ensure quality of their program. Lastly, the Junior Kindergarten is acquiring licensing through the State of Arizona for operation.

**Issues:** Staff turnover is improving. They purchased a school bus to address transportation issues. They are overhauling outdated math and religion books. Senate Bill 1312 in Arizona , the Empowerment Scholarship Act, allows children who live within the boundaries of a Native American reservation in the state of Arizona access to private school education – increasing the school's ability to charge fees to the state for children enrolled.

**Demand for Early Childhood Education (ECE):** The local head start preschool reported meeting capacity and a lengthy waiting list by May of every year and had turn away many children to early education options.

**Need for ECE:** Right now approximately 1 out of every 5 SMIS Kindergarten students had formal classroom exposure prior to attending. This has been identified to delay progress for students

to be first-grade-ready because of adjustments they experience during their 10 months in Kindergarten. Students are endangered of being retained due to lack of progress.

**Initial recommendation re: readiness for ECE funding from BWF:** This school would be a good prospect to expand their pre-K programming, based on partnerships, infrastructure, and internal development efforts. They have a new(ish) Principal, but if that person stays on board, stability should not be an issue.

Summary of Better Way Foundation funding to SMIS:

Project Title	Award	Project End Date	Months
DRIVE Initiative: inspire students to embody school mission; build enthusiasm for leadership and career choices; and, to engage students in taking personal responsibility in preparing for success in higher education	\$20,000	5/31/2011	12
to expand their base of support through the acquisition of new donors, re-connecting with alumni, and assessing the giving capacity of benefactors	\$26,000	7/31/2011	8
Financial Resource Activities Expansion	\$26,000	12/31/2012	12
Increase Donor Base	\$25,000	7/31/2013	12
Increase donor base	\$25,000	4/8/2014	12
Strategic Advancement Phase 1	\$15,500	8/26/2014	12
Leadership Development	\$25,000	3/31/2015	12
SMIS K-12 Math Department Supplies & Training	\$25,000	6/30/2015	12
<b>Total Funding Received</b>	<b>\$187,500</b>		

About the Navajo Nation:<sup>46</sup>

Demographics for the Navajo Nation

- Population: 180,462
- Median age: 24
- Education for ages 25+: 56 percent high school degree, 7 percent college degree
- Navajo Nation annual budget: \$96 million
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According to the U.S. Census 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 39.8 percent of all families with related children under age 5 on the Navajo Nation Reservation are below federal poverty level, as compared with 18.6 percent of the rest of the United States.

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<sup>46</sup> The Navajo Nation: Division of Economic Development. "Facts at a Glance."  
<http://navajobusiness.com/fastFacts/index.htm>. Accessed 29 Aug 2016.

Median family income is \$31,069, compared with \$65,443 in the rest of the country. 22.3 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, compared with 9.2 percent in the rest of the U.S. 55.8 percent is not in the labor force, compared with 36.1 percent in the rest the country. Navajo Nation students<sup>47</sup>

- 244 schools.
- Combined total of 38,109 students in the Navajo Nation.
- 60.5 percent (23,056) of students attend public school.
- The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) operates 31 schools on the reservation.
- In school year 2012-2013, BIE-operated schools and grant/contract schools collectively educated 39.5 percent of all Navajo students, with 21.2 percent attending BIE schools and 18.3 percent attending grant/contract schools.
- 25 Navajo schools and 7 Navajo residential halls receive federal grants.

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.indian.senate.gov/sites/default/files/upload/images/5.21.14 percent20Testimony percent20- percent20Timothy percent20Benally percent20- percent20Navajo percent20Nation percent20Department percent20of percent20Dine'.pdf](http://www.indian.senate.gov/sites/default/files/upload/images/5.21.14%20Testimony%20-%20Timothy%20Benally%20-%20Navajo%20Nation%20Department%20of%20Dine'.pdf)

## St. Augustine Indian Mission School

**Location:** Winnebago, NE

**Size of annual budget:** \$1.6 million

**History of pre-k programs:** n/a

**Stability of staff, finances:** The Principal has been with the school for 15 years, seven as Principal. The staff has remained largely the same over the last several years. They have a Director of Development. In 2012, a comprehensive Strategic Plan was developed to guide the direction of the Mission over the next five years. That Strategic Plan is regularly revised to ensure they are following the path that was developed. No deficit has been experienced in the past two fiscal years.

**Infrastructure, supplies:** They have partnered with the Better Way Foundation and Ho-Chunk, Inc. to purchase iPads so that more technology was available for student access. They are working with the Archdiocese of Omaha to secure funding to update their technology and communication infrastructure within the school. They are also currently working on securing funding through e-rate to increase bandwidth availability within the school.

**School Partnerships:** They have significant partnerships with area organizations that help provide value-added education in the arts and music.

**Other potential partnerships in the area:** In the past year, an early childhood education center was created on the Winnebago Reservation which is providing services for youth from birth to pre-kindergarten. Educare Winnebago is the only early childhood education program in the Winnebago community. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, it is separate from the Winnebago Tribe, and its board includes a diversity of community representatives.

**Issues:** n/a

**Demand for Early Childhood Education (ECE):** Educare Winnebago is at capacity, with a waiting list.

**Need for ECE:** In the past academic year, all students at St. Augustine Indian Mission School advanced to the next grade level with the exception of one Kindergarten student who was retained in that grade.

**Initial recommendation re: readiness for ECE funding from BWF:** There does not appear to be any momentum or stated interest from St. Augustine Indian Mission School in ECE programming. However, Educare Winnebago could either present an opportunity for a partnership of some sort with St. Augustine Indian Mission School or direct additional funding to Educare.

### Summary of Better Way Foundation funding to St. Augustine Indian Mission School:

Project Title	Award	Project End Date	Months
Incorporate a spirituality component into the St. Augustine Indian Mission schools to the counseling program and curriculum.	\$36,000	10/15/2010	12
Reading Initiative	\$150,000	2/14/2012	24
Reading Improvement Program	\$100,000	12/31/2014	24

St. Augustine IPad Literacy Enhancement Project	\$25,000	12/31/2014	12
<b>Total Funding Received</b>	<b>\$311,000</b>		

About the Winnebago Reservation:

According to the U.S. Census 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 35.2 percent of all families with related children under age 5 on the Winnebago Reservation are below federal poverty level, as compared with 18.6 percent of the rest of the United States. Median family income is \$49,231, compared with \$65,443 in the rest of the country. 13.0 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, compared with 9.2 percent in the rest of the U.S. 33.6 percent is not in the labor force, compared with 36.1 percent in the rest the country.



## St. Charles School

**Location:** San Carlos, AZ

**Size of annual budget:** \$764,000

**History of pre-k programs:** n/a

**Stability of staff, finances:** They have a Director of Development on staff (for 14 years). There has been a turnover of principals within the past two years. Their Principal for almost 19 years retired, leaving the school searching for a replacement. They began the school year with a new Principal but he left for personal reasons. On such short notice, they continued with an Interim Principal for the remainder of the school year.

**Infrastructure, supplies:** Information not available in materials reviewed.

**School Partnerships:** Save the Children funds their accelerated reader program. St. Charles School has a partnership with the local public school which caters lunches to their students at the school cafeteria. They have a sister school in the Diocese of Tucson that teaches their students their Native American language.

**Other potential partnerships in the area:** The tribe's Headstart and Day Care Center programs offers the Apache language to the younger children on the reservation.

**Demand for Early Childhood Education (ECE):** N/a because the proposal submitted to BWF was not centered on ECE.

**Need for ECE:** See above.

**Initial recommendation re: readiness for ECE funding from BWF:** There does not appear to be any momentum or stated interest from St. Charles School in ECE programming. They have an interim Principal, so with turnover at the top, it could be difficult to launch a new ECE program that would be sustainable once new top staff were hired and oriented.

### Summary of Better Way Foundation funding to St. Charles School:

Project Title	Award	Project End Date	Months
to implement a counseling program assisting students and families of Apache background	\$25,000	10/15/2011	24
Gathering of Eagles Counseling Program	\$24,600	12/31/2011	12
a counseling program assisting students and families of Apache background	\$10,000	12/31/2011	12
Gathering of Eagles Counseling Program	\$25,000	8/31/2013	12
Curriculum Leader - Change request approved 7/2/2014	\$25,000	12/31/2014	12
Textbook Purchase	\$25,000	6/30/2015	12
Teach Them program	\$25,000	6/30/2015	12
<b>Total Funding Received</b>	<b>\$159,600</b>		

About the San Carlos Apache Reservation:

The total tribal enrollment includes 13,246 people, with the enrolled tribal membership in residence on the reservation at 10,709 people.

According to the U.S. Census 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 32.5 percent of all families with related children under age 5 on the San Carlos Apache Reservation are below federal poverty level, as compared with 18.6 percent of the rest of the United States. Median family income is \$32,908, compared with \$65,443 in the rest of the country. 30.1 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, compared with 9.2 percent in the rest of the U.S. 51.6 percent is not in the labor force, compared with 36.1 percent in the rest the country.

## De La Salle Blackfeet School

**Location:** Browning, MT

**Size of annual budget:** \$575,000

**History of pre-k programs:** N/a. De La Salle Blackfeet School offers a strong faith-based education for students in the 4th through 8th grade.

**Stability of staff, finances:** They requested funding from BWF to hire a Principal. The current Principal has been with the school for three years. The two most significant challenges they consistently face are staff turnover and working with limited resources to provide the best education possible. Another challenge present for the past two years has been the absence of a full-time Principal to work with their teachers and students. Currently Br. Dale Mooney is serving as both President and Principal. Both of these challenges are affected by the limited ability for one person to serve as both President and Principal.

**Infrastructure, supplies:** n/a

**School Partnerships:** They are connected with the Lasallian Network nationwide and the Christian Brothers of the Midwest. They are also a member of the National Catholic Education Association and the American Indian Catholic Schools Network through the Better Way Foundation. They are also a mission school of the Diocese of Helena and a ministry of Little Flower Parish in Browning, MT.

**Other potential partnerships in the area:** n/a (not noted)

**Issues:** Though financial challenges were originally the reason to eliminate the Principal position two years ago, it has affected their ability to overcome some of their other challenges. They planned to begin a Fiscal Health Study during the summer of 2015. They have a Director of Development who is new (about 1 year).

**Demand for Early Childhood education (ECE):** On the Blackfeet Reservation, the Piegan Institute operates Nizipuhwahsin (Real Speak) schools offer K-8 education in the Blackfoot language reaching approximately 60 students annually.

**Need for ECE:** n/a

**Initial recommendation re: readiness for ECE funding from BWF:** The youngest students this school serves is 4<sup>th</sup> grade. They do not appear to have the infrastructure, instructors or curriculum to serve younger students.

Summary of Better Way Foundation funding to De La Salle Blackfeet School:

Project Title	Award	Project End Date	Months
project funding to continue and expand the Guidance Counseling and Support Program to help current and graduated students be successful in school and matriculate to post-secondary education (paid full amount through CCF)	\$67,000	12/31/2009	12
continued fdn funding – expand the Guidance Counseling and Support Program to help current and graduated	\$50,000	10/15/2010	12

students be successful in school and matriculate to post-secondary education			
continue administering the Guidance Counseling and Support Program to help current and graduated students be successful in school and matriculate to post-secondary education	\$50,000	12/31/2011	12
Guidance Counseling and Graduate Support	\$50,000	7/31/2012	12
Graduate Support Program	\$25,000	7/31/2013	12
Graduate Support Program	\$25,000	4/8/2014	12
Grief and Loss Counseling Program	\$25,000	6/30/2015	12
Graduate Support Program	\$25,000	7/31/2015	12
<b>Total Funding Received</b>	<b>\$317,000</b>		

About the Blackfeet Nation:

The Blackfeet Nation’s population has an enrollment of 17,135 members with about 9,088 living on or near the reservation, as well as several hundred Blackfeet descendants and Indians from other tribes, and a few hundred non-Indians. The total population within the boundaries of the Reservation is 10,405 according to the Blackfeet Nation’s Planning Department.

Unemployment is a major problem on the Blackfeet Reservation, with 5,644 tribal members 18 years or older being unemployed according to the Blackfeet Nation’s Planning Department. In addition, 5,278 are listed as underemployed by the same department. The Bureau of Indian Affairs reports an unemployment rate of 70% for the Blackfeet Reservation, and 26% employed, but under the poverty level.

According to the U.S. Census 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 32.8 percent of all families with related children under age 5 on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation are below federal poverty level, as compared with 18.6 percent of the rest of the United States. Median family income is \$35,240, compared with \$65,443 in the rest of the country. 20.9 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, compared with 9.2 percent in the rest of the U.S. 43.6 percent is not in the labor force, compared with 36.1 percent in the rest the country.

## Red Cloud Indian School, Inc. (RCIS)

**Location:** Pine Ridge, SD

**Size of annual budget:** \$13.5 million

**History of pre-k programs:** N/a. Red Cloud provides an education to 600 Lakota students each year at Red Cloud Elementary School (K-8) and Red Cloud High School (9-12) in the village of Pine Ridge, and at Our Lady of Lourdes Elementary School (K-8) in the town of Porcupine.

**Stability of staff, finances:** The Executive Vice President has been with the school 27 years and in his current position for seven years. Decisions are made based on their most recent institution-wide strategic plan that incorporates tangible areas where they intend make impact over a five-year period (2014-2019).

**Infrastructure, supplies:** In 2011, Red Cloud garnered extensive regional and national partner support, including a generous three-year gift from the Toyota USA Foundation to complete the renovation of state-of-the-art science labs, provide teacher professional development in the sciences, and support an afterschool club where students engage in original research to compete nationally. RCIS also enhanced mentoring and internship opportunities by connecting students with Native scientists from across the country and built a geodesic greenhouse to function as an outdoor learning lab for the sciences. By adding access to more computers, teacher professional development to ensure math success, and developing an eco-curriculum using their geodesic greenhouse and garden area, they are offering state of the art lessons on sustainability and hands-on STEM activities from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Last year, they embarked on an effort to ensure safe, reliable transportation for their students by implementing a plan to replace their aging bus fleet.

**School Partnerships:** Thunder Valley-Lakota Immersion Day Care is a local child care center that has close ties to Red Cloud and works with them to recruit families for community outreach events and will also partner with them to share literary resources with families.

**Other potential partnerships in the area:** Red Cloud has a history of strong fundraising and community partnerships, as well as links to cultural and language leaders/teachers in the community.

**Issues:** Red Cloud has identified recruitment and retention of teachers in core academic areas as a priority issue in their five-year strategic plan, and is enhancing professional development and leadership opportunities for teachers.

**Summary of ECD history and current activities in Red Cloud's community:** RCIS ran a Montessori program with 3, 4 and 5 year-olds from approximately 1994 until 2007, when it was discontinued due to lack of funding and difficulties in recruiting professional staff. RCIS then transitioned to only offer a traditional Kindergarten. RCIS has a close relationship with Lakota Immersion Day Care in Oglala, which offers Lakota immersion day care to 2, 3, and 4 year-olds (which will expand services to include 5-year-olds in fall 2016). Oglala Lakota College runs a Lakota immersion Head Start program. A number of other schools on the reservation offer pre-K programming.

**Initial recommendation re: readiness for ECE funding from BWF:** Red Cloud is widely recognized for their extensive services to their students and currently conducts Kindergarten-

level programming. Their potential to sustain pre-K programming after the conclusion of a BWF grant is very good. Red Cloud has significant potential for a successful BWF pilot investment.

Summary of Better Way Foundation funding to RCIS:

Project Title	Award	Project End Date	Months
High School Counseling Program	\$90,000	12/1/2004	12
general operating expenses	\$5,000	12/1/2005	12
expenses for school counselor	\$70,000	12/30/2006	12
Counseling Program at Red Cloud High School	\$86,650	12/21/2007	12
Project funding for Mahpiya Luta Lakol Waunspe Wicakiyapi - Teaching Lakota to Red Cloud students, a demonstration project to develop and disseminate a Lakota Language Curriculum for grades K-12.	\$300,000	12/31/2011	36
K-12 Lakota Language Curriculum	\$200,000	12/31/2013	36
Teaching Lakota to Red Cloud students	\$25,000	4/8/2014	12
general operating support	\$5,000	11/18/2014	12
Advancing the Academic Preparation of Red Cloud Students through Research and Data	\$25,000	12/31/2014	12
Teaching Lakota to Red Cloud Students	\$25,000	6/30/2015	12
General Operations	\$2,000	9/30/2015	12
<b>Total Funding Received</b>	<b>\$833,650</b>		

About the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation:<sup>48</sup>

Pine Ridge covers more than 2.8 million acres in SW South Dakota; it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest reservation in the U.S.

Population: 19,282 (according to the U.S. Census 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Economic conditions:

- 80 percent of residents are unemployed.
- 49 percent of residents live below the federal poverty line.
- 61 percent of residents below the age of 18 live below the poverty line.
- Reservation is located in Oglala Lakota County, the 2<sup>nd</sup> poorest county in the U.S. at \$6,286 per capita income.

<sup>48</sup> Red Cloud Indian School, *The Reservation*. 2016. <http://www.redcloudschool.org/reservation>. Accessed 26 Aug 2016.

#### Health and Wellness conditions:

- The infant mortality rate is 5 times higher than the U.S. national average.
- The reservation is dry, but 12,500 cans of beer are sold in White Clay, Nebraska, just over the border from reservation.
- Obesity, diabetes, and heart disease occur in epidemic proportions on Pine Ridge.
- Death rates due to diabetes among Native Americans are three times higher than among the general U.S. population.
- Unhealthy diets and lack of exercise are two main contributing factors.
- Life expectancy in Pine Ridge is the lowest anywhere in the Western hemisphere except for Haiti. A recent study found the life expectancy for men to be 48 years, and for women, it is 52 years.

#### Oglala Lakota County residents and facilities:

- Oglala Lakota County has the highest population rate of Native Americans in the U.S., and the lowest percentage of Caucasians.
- About 70 percent of residents have attained a high school diploma, while 12.1 percent have attained a Bachelor's degree.
- On the reservation, 13 percent of residents lack complete plumbing facilities, while 9.2 percent lack complete kitchen facilities. 22.8 percent lack phone service.

#### Youth Risk Behavior among South Dakota high school students:

- 67 percent are sexually active (South Dakota Office of Comprehensive School Health).
  - 88 percent have used alcohol during their life.
  - 31 percent seriously considered attempting suicide.
  - 15 percent attempted suicide in the last 12 months.
  - 90 percent tried cigarette smoking.
  - 80 percent tried marijuana.

#### Lakota Language:

- There are an estimated 6,000 fluent speakers of the Lakota language today (UCLA Language Materials Project). The study found the language to be in severe danger of becoming extinct.
- In the early 1990s, roughly half the Pine Ridge population spoke Lakota. Today, that number has fallen to less than ¼ of the Pine Ridge population.
- Average age of speaker is 65, estimating that the majority are first-language speakers. The rate of teaching second-language speaker is falling drastically behind.

# SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RESEARCH: BWF-FUNDED SCHOOLS & PINE RIDGE SITE VISIT

This section about primary research conducted is divided into two sections:

1. Research conducted in communities of selected BWF-funded schools; and
2. Interviews with Experts and Stakeholders.

## **Primary research conducted in communities of selected BWF-funded schools**

In the process of reviewing the schools and assessing the ECD efforts in their communities, Echo Hawk Consulting determined the potential to gather additional information based on:

- Schools' track record in ECD or (at least) groundwork laid;
- Strong Leadership;
- Stability;
- Fundraising ability;
- Partnerships/established relationships;
- Evaluation systems in place or the ability to develop evaluation systems; and
- Based in community/Native-led.

Echo Hawk Consulting prioritized gathering more information from:

- St. Michael Indian School because of its: current pre-K programming; partnerships, infrastructure, and internal development efforts;
- Red Cloud Indian School because of its: extensive services to its students; current Kindergarten-level programming; and good potential to sustain pre-K programming after the conclusion of a Better Way Foundation grant; and
- Echo Hawk Consulting made one site visit to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in western South Dakota (to Red Cloud Indian School, Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, Lakota Immersion Day Care and Oglala Lakota College) and conducted several conference calls.

## **Summary of conference calls with St. Michael Indian School**

In May 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting and representatives of the Better Way Foundation participated in two conference calls with Dot Teso, President of St. Michael Indian School.

In the early 2000s, the school embarked on an early education program called Early Bird which allowed for a few hours of instruction centered on teaching parents to teach at home, and supplies were provided through grant funding. This program was instituted for a few years, but had problems with parental engagement, parents' schedules, and funding.

SMIS included ½-day Junior Kindergarten for the first time during the 2015-16 school year. 100% of the 18 pre-K students are Navajo. Enrollment for the 2016-17 school year is already at



capacity. There is a wait-list, since there are not many options on the Navajo Reservation for early education. The Early Step Up program is being implemented into SMIS' Pre-K.

Right now, only one out of every five SMIS Kindergarten students had formal classroom exposure prior to attending SMIS. This delays progress for students to be first-grade-ready because of adjustments they experience during their 10 months in Kindergarten. Students are in danger of being held back due to lack of progress.

The local Head Start reported meeting capacity and a lengthy waiting list by May of every year and has had turn away many children. According to SMIS, the local Head Start program is not high quality – more babysitting than a learning environment.

### ***Issues identified:***

#### ***Parental finances***

- Tuition for pre-K is \$4,000 for full-day students, and \$2,000 for half-day students.
- It costs an estimated \$6,300 to educate a kindergartner at SMIS.
- The diocese has increased tuition (at other schools) across the board 58% in the last 2 years.
- St. Michael recently raised tuition for the first time in 5 years to \$4,000. Although this cost is high for local community, it does not come close to covering the school costs.
- No financing or scholarships are currently available to parents to pay for early childhood education.
- 2/3 of enrolled kids at St. Michael (73 children) were not on financial aid.
- Parents (mostly professionals) of all 18 students enrolled in pre-K pay tuition, despite the financial strain.
- Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account program provides funding only for children aged 5 or older or disabled children aged 3 or 4, so this program is unhelpful for ECD.

#### ***School finances***

- \$300,000 operating budget shortfall this year.
- Committing to pre-K efforts includes other costs such as administration, security, and building maintenance. Many costs not included in their submitted budget are crucial for operations. Specialized items increase the cost: right-sized chairs, desks, bathrooms, etc.
- The current building is in a great location for young children and is in great shape – it can legally hold up to 24 pre-K students.
- With a new renovation (that would cost \$100,000, but the building may be bought for \$1), SMIS could serve at least 30 students.
- The pre-K wish list includes outside play area, security features, and separation for 3 and 4 year-olds.

#### ***Teacher issues***

- Because costs for volunteer-teachers from organizations like AmeriCorps costs nearly the same as a teacher salary (\$24,000 for a volunteer vs. \$26,000 for a salary), SMIS is shifting away from volunteer-teachers to training community members to teach.
- SMIS is looking at models that will offer students more stability and consistency in their teachers. High poverty and inner city schools and high risk schools are using the “looping” teacher model. The teachers move with the students as they progress each grade level until the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Then, the teacher returns to the Kindergarten level and begins the loop again. Another model that works well in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> grades is to have one teacher teaching all the math and science, with another teaching all the art, etc.
- The three biggest obstacles to SMIS (and other schools) growing its own teachers:
  1. **Teacher Retention:** Lack of funds to pay teachers a living salary.
  2. **Teacher Professional Development:** Lack of funding for teachers to attend education conferences and for Continuing Education for teachers getting their teaching certificate (which would cost between \$1,500 and \$3,000) or B.A. With some teachers more interested in getting a Master’s Degree than in professional development, SMIS has been discussing with Regis University in Denver the possibility of assisting teachers to get a Master’s at no cost to the teacher.
  3. **Teacher Recruitment:** No incentives/strong benefits for teachers to come work for St. Michael. Turnover is part of the labor problem because teachers are underpaid and undertrained employees.

### Site Visit to Pine Ridge

Crystal Echo Hawk conducted a 2.5 day site visit to Pine Ridge Reservation June 1-3, 2016.

#### Red Cloud Indian School:

At Red Cloud Indian School, Echo Hawk Consulting met with Robert Brave Heart, Sr., Executive Vice President. The following is a summary of the information and insights that Mr. Brave Heart shared:

The Lakota language is woven throughout RCIS’ K-12 curriculum and includes literacy materials. About 40-60 parents and children attend RCIS’ weekly outreach efforts to engage the community, parents, and children to learn and practice the language together.

RCIS is considering options regarding online learning, but must account for obvious challenges with access to technology by parents, children and the community.

Through a partnership with Lakota Immersion Day Care (MOU signed in 2015), RCIS will be working in the classroom at the elementary school with children starting in Kindergarten. RCIS strongly believes that Lakota Immersion Day Care is much more like a school than a childcare provider and provides quality ECD programming.

While the Lakota language is critically important to children’s development, additional resources to support readiness for kindergarten, basic skills, can make or break a child. The deficit can be hard to make up especially in Indian Country if children do not come to

Kindergarten and elementary school with basic skills with problems starting to be very pronounced by 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Currently, Head Start is the biggest ECD provider on Pine Ridge. Since Oglala Lakota College assumed management of the program from the tribe, the program has improved. However, there are still a number of challenges. Shannon County Schools' pre-K program serving Lakota children at Pine Ridge is not regarded as being very effective. There is a definite need with regard to ECD programming and increased investment in ECD is critical to the success of RCIS students.

In the past, RCIS operated a Montessori program serving 25 children, but closed it due to financial reasons and largely due to challenges with finding, training and retaining qualified Montessori teachers. RCIS would re-open a Montessori program if it had the resources and opportunity to build the capacity to operate the program, recruit and retain qualified teachers. The Montessori method of teaching is RCIS' and the community's preferred approach for ECD.

**Issues faced by RCIS overall and in re-establishing an ECD program include:**

- Difficulty of recruiting staff to Pine Ridge because of low wages and lack of housing. Salaries offered by RCIS can't compete with those offered by the Bureau of Indian Education or county schools. RCIS has the lowest salary range on the reservation (\$28,000-\$30,000), significantly lower than those offered by other schools (in the range of \$50,000).
- RCIS is reliant on private money from donors vs. other schools who access state and federal resources.
- RCIS would need to consider constructing a new building to house any new ECD initiatives as space is limited in their current facility.
- When asked about how RCIS deals with the challenges on Pine Ridge and how that impacts the success of students, Bob stated: "Poverty breeds all types of social ills. Schools can't fix poverty. We can equip children with knowledge and tools, prep them for college, but we can't fix what is going on in the home, community, due to poverty, historical trauma and a complexity of issues with deep roots."
- RCIS' wish list is for resources to support:
  - More qualified staff that can be compensated with competitive salaries;
  - Facility renovation;
  - Ongoing professional development opportunities for staff;
  - Initiatives to promote Lakota leadership in children, parents, community, and staff;
  - Enhancements to existing transportation capacity for students;
  - General support for operations; and
  - Resources to support Pre-K curriculum development and to also provide day care.

Potential for future funding intervention: RCIS was open to the possibility of conducting a feasibility study to (re-)start its ECD programming and to expand its partnership with Lakota Immersion Day Care.

**Site Visit to Thunder Valley Development Corporation (CDC) and Lakota Immersion Day Care:**

*“Creating an ecosystem of opportunity through deliberate action and systemic solutions as large and comprehensive as the historic challenges facing our community.”*

– Mission of Thunder Valley CDC

Thunder Valley CDC is a 34-acre community development project run by the people of Pine Ridge, who intend for it to become a national model for others struggling to elevate poverty, and build sustainable communities. “[The project’s] purpose is to knock down doors that have been closed on our people and create new pathways,” according to Executive Director Nick Tilsen. President Barack Obama has recognized Thunder Valley CDC as a place of economic development to redefine Native American country.

A 2010 HUD grant helped the community to develop the project, with this funding now augmented by foundations, other government agencies such as USDA, and individuals. It aims to provide single and multi-family housing, a youth shelter, food growing operations, community and education facilities, and retail spaces for local businesses. The project also trains the local workforce in green building practices and guides families to build their own homes, according to a 12-minute documentary, “Ecosystem of Opportunity” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6aBQ09SjNI>).

At Thunder Valley, Echo Hawk Consulting met with Nick Tilsen, Executive Director and Liz Welch, Director of Advancement along with Matthew Rama of the Lakota Immersion Day Care. The following is a summary of the information and insights that Mr. Tilsen, Ms. Welch shared and Mr. Rama shared:

Thunder Valley CDC initially served as a fiscal sponsor the Lakota Immersion Day Care program. Lakota Immersion is now in the process of becoming a formal division of Thunder Valley CDC to allow Lakota Immersion staff to focus on the language and ECD programming and not struggle with managing fundraising and operations.

Lakota Immersion Day Care serves 20 children ages 2-4, with a waiting list of 30-40. They have very high parent involvement and according to staff, they feel like they are seeing a positive change in the children and families served.

Its primary funding, is through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Native Americans/Social and Economic Development Strategies program ends in August 2016. This will leave a gap in covering its \$430,000 annual costs for four FTE staff, operations, and programs.

The Day Care is located 45 minutes from Thunder Valley in Oglala, operating out of an older building rented from a tribal member without a formal lease (so there is a degree of instability of their ability to stay there long-term). Supporting the programming in Oglala is the first priority.

Eventually as the housing goes up at Thunder Valley within the next two years, the Day Care would like to open a second site at the housing development, but would need at least \$1 million in capital funds to support a new building in Oglala and one at Thunder Valley.

The Day Care is very dedicated to teacher development and to recruiting and training community members as 2<sup>nd</sup> language learners and teachers. Some of the teachers are starting to get ECD certification through the Day Care's partners of Black Hills State University, Chadron State College or Oglala Lakota College (with the annual costs for certification estimated at \$30,000). Creating this pipeline of Lakota language teachers is recognized as critical. With additional resources, they can train more Lakota language teachers in 1-2 years to start at entry level with youngest students, and within 2-4 years they can help these teachers to become certified in ECD which will help to expand the programming. Teacher retention is not a challenge for the Day Care because the community members recruited want to be a part of the program to learn their language and culture and are emotionally and culturally invested in the goals, mission and programs.

The Day Care and Thunder Valley CDC are very interested in expanding to serve 40 children in the very near future. They have big ambitions and plans to scale up with the appropriate resources.

The Day Care staff are developing their own ECD Lakota books and curriculum which could have the potential to become earned income streams by making them available to other Lakota ECD programs on Pine Ridge, other reservations and communities.

In the meantime, securing funds for operating costs are a major priority as is a new building.

Final Thoughts: At the conclusion of our meeting, Nick Tilsen was asked to share any final thoughts or advice for the Better Way Foundation as they think about potentially building more relationships at Pine Ridge and across Indian Country. As a result, Nick shared the following: "We ask that any interested funders make a long-term commitment to a grantee and to be a partner and not just a funder. We ask that they not only invest in supporting the work but in documenting the learning."

### **Site Visit to Oglala Lakota College (OLC) Early Head Start and Head Start Programs:**

Prior to meeting with the Head Start Director, Crystal Echo Hawk visited the Pine Ridge Head Start location, located on the corner of the busiest and one of the most notorious intersections of Pine Ridge. In her observations, she noted that it looked much like a prison, surrounded by

12-foot fences and razor wire. It is located less than 1 mile from White Clay. The four beer-only liquor stores in Whiteclay sell about 3.5 million cans of beer a year, mostly to residents of the adjacent, and legally dry, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which is within walking distance across the border not only to the town of Pine Ridge but the Head Start Center. Administrators say that the extra security is needed due to the dangerous element of alcohol and drug consumption in the immediate area (White Clay), drunk drivers and other possible dangers to the children served at the facility.

At Oglala Lakota College (OLC), Echo Hawk Consulting met with Janice Richards, Director of the Early Head Start/Head Start Program. The following is a summary of the information and insights that Ms. Richards shared:

OLC is responsible for 591 children (their mandated service goal number) at Pine Ridge in 9 districts on the reservation with 10 Head Start centers (serving 491 children) and five early Head Start centers (serving 100 children). However, they struggle to meet that goal and usually fall short by 100 children.

Besides OLC's Head Starts, there also pre-K programs in each of the districts where there are schools on the Reservation.

In order to address the issue of not meeting their numbers, Janice organized a comprehensive, reservation-wide Child Fund study to determine why they are not reaching more children. In their research, 498 homes on the reservation were identified with children aged 0-5. However, it was found that the majority of these children were not participating in ECD programming:

- Forty percent of parents whose children were not participating in ECD just didn't want to make the effort to take their children to ECD programming;
- Many parents struggle with drug and alcohol addiction and this was a barrier to their children's participation;
- Many also simply don't understand the importance of ECD programming and just want to keep their children home until Kindergarten; and
- A significant number of families are living in extreme rural isolation, lack transportation and are not receiving services as a result. Sixty-eight children were found to be living in these circumstances in extreme rural areas.

According to Janice, there are a number of very serious barriers and challenges to increasing the enrollment of Pine Ridge children in ECD programming whether offered through Head Start or elsewhere. It will take many stakeholders working together to address the under-enrollment of children in ECD programs and truancy.

#### **Other challenges Janice cited in serving children in ECD**

- Lack of pediatric mental health services. One psychologist provides services only one day a month.

- The trauma children are experiencing at home means that they are acting out at school and Head Start lacks the capacity to properly care and provide services to these children.
- Resources are needed to address mental health issues, specifically pediatric mental health care. ECD at Pine Ridge needs to include mental health and building resiliency of children. There is currently primarily only a focus on adult behavioral health on the Reservation.
- There needs to be a priority developed within the standards addressing social and emotional intelligence.
- Head Start mandates that 10% of the population they serve be children with disabilities. Yet, Head Start offers no additional funding to provide the proper care and services that these children need.
- It is absolutely essential that OLC find ways to build collaboration with a variety of partners working to serve children and families across the reservation to increase collaboration and resource sharing. More resources are needed for the local Head Starts to work with other tribal and non-tribal agencies, so that they can share and coordinate resources and wrap-around services to better serve children and families.
- Partnerships with local schools (which is beginning to be a focus) will bridge the gap between pre-K and Kindergarten to help children be better prepared to enter Kindergarten. Many schools are fairly unaware of what Head Start does or has to offer.
- Truancy and under enrollment need to be addressed through tribal policy change. A tribal council-mandated, reservation-wide policy change could emphasize the importance of ECD, make ECD enrollment mandatory, and create penalties for parents for truancy.
- Teacher recruitment and retention. Many teacher positions are vacant due to the lack of qualified applicants who are willing to take mandated drug tests (with drug addiction, especially meth, rampant on the Reservation). Low Head Start starting salaries (\$19,000, with \$24,000-28,000 offered to those with a Bachelor's degree) means that teachers go to BIE schools, even after OLC offers classes for their training and certification. The Head Start centers in Porcupine, Kyle, Wamblee, Oglala and Allen perform the best due to: community ownership/pride in the Head Start programs, high rates of parent involvement; great, long-serving staff who communicate with parents and make the learning environment exciting and fun.

### **Innovative, Systems Change Strategies**

Janice has started a "Bridging the Gap" group with key stakeholders in ECD and elementary education from local schools to foster collaboration, communication, information and resource sharing, coordination and communication about activities related to ECD. At the time of the Echo Hawk Consulting site visit, Janice had already conducted one meeting which she felt was successful in laying the groundwork for the need for such a group and efforts. She was preparing for their second meeting in mid-June. Among the major issues Janice hopes that the group can address is the major problem that the Head Start standards for school readiness and South Dakota-state Kindergarten standards do not align.

Janice is also working to start another ECD-focused group and initiative called “One Voice” involving agencies in Jackson, Bennet, and Oglala Lakota Counties that are focused on special education and children with disabilities.

### **Program Priorities**

Looking ahead, Janice shared the following as top priorities for OLC Early Head Start and Head Start:

- Children’s mental health;
- Incorporation of Lakota language and culture;
- Collaboration and partnerships;
- Children’s access to healthy and sustainable food;
- Resources to increase teacher salaries
- Safety of children, particularly at Pine Ridge Head Start location; and
- Conducting a community assessment and data collection to better understand needs, challenges to better inform strategies and interventions.

*“Wolakokiciyàpi”  
-Mutual respect,  
mutual  
cooperation,  
community and  
moving in one  
direction.”*

--Head Start Guiding Value

### Funding needs:

- “Bridging the Gap” and “One Voice” inter-agency and community collaborations;
- Development of a reservation-wide campaign about the importance of ECD to educate parents and increase enrollment and support by the tribe and other stakeholders;
- Support for ways for stakeholders to share and coordinate resources;
- Address children’s trauma/support for pediatric mental health services, including growing mental health service providers from the community who understand Lakota culture and language and who are highly trained in trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences;
- Incorporation of Lakota language and culture. Developing a standardized language and culture curriculum and training teachers would address the 70% of teachers who don’t speak Lakota and the lack of consistent curriculum and activities.
- Operations: \$2.5 million is needed to support the Head Start centers on the Reservation. Basic operations costs are covered through their Head Start funding. However, other funding is needed to augment operations and support other unmet needs including low staff salaries, facilities, and technology.



# SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL PRIMARY RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS WITH EXPERTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The process of conducting research for Better Way Foundation led Echo Hawk Consulting to contact several other experts and activists in the field of ECD:

- Ahniwake Rose, Executive Director, National Indian Education Association, ECD policy issues in Indian Country;
- Alvin Warren, New Mexico Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Kellogg-funded ECD programs in New Mexico, Navajo Nation;
- Navajo Head Start, Educare Winnebago and a U.S. Department of Education grantee serving the Winnebago community;
- Tarajeau Yazzie, Co-Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the American Indian College Fund and Senior Program Officer for early childhood education initiatives, Restorative Teachings: A Tribal College and University Collaborative to Strengthen Systems of Care and Learning with Native Families and Children;
- Patrice Kunesh and staff from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis on Early Childhood Development in Indian Country;
- Cynthia Weaver, Program Officer, Annie E. Casey Foundation and staff from the Tribal REDI (*Research-based, Developmentally Informed*) Project;

Below are summaries of our discussions and findings.

## National Indian Education Association

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) is the largest and oldest Indian education organization in the nation and advocates for Indian control of Indian education.

NIEA believes that healthy Native communities start and end with healthy and successful Native children. The National Indian Head Start Directors Association is one of their partners.

Much of NIEA's efforts center on policy, particularly at the federal level (which obviously influences resources for tribes but also may often bypass tribes in favor of including states) and at the state level. Overall, tribes need to be more active as stakeholders, becoming more involved in the process of developing policies and pushing for policy changes. NIEA assists them with this process and acts as an advocate for tribes in general.

Education funding and programs are often driven by state policy. There is a requirement for states to work with tribes in K-12 education but not early learning. Working with states is now even more important with the December 2015 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which replaced and updated the No Child Left Behind Act which gives additional latitude to states in developing education policy. One good place to start would be a state-by-state

checklist of what states are doing for tribes (i.e., if the state has a tribal-based pre-K program- which most don't).

One of the positives to come from ESSA (and a place for tribes to engage) is that language immersion programs may be funded in public K-12 schools. Ahniwake mentioned research that students (not necessarily Native Americans) with dual language perform better in cognitive skills than mono-lingual students by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Children's overall performance in school increases if the child is immersed in community of acceptance.

According to Ahniwake, both funders and Native communities would benefit from research on best practices in Native education, including how tribes tailor Head Start programs for their cultures and communities and (possibly) integrate it into existing programs and systems. Lack of focus on and funding for professional-level research that can validate tribes' approach (and document how different tribes' needs and methods vary) is a chronic issue.

### W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF)

WKKF has become a major funder in the field of ECD, including investing in Native communities. New Mexico is one of the major states of focus for the foundation because of its high rates of poverty, inequitable levels of educational achievement and poor access to quality food and health care, while concurrently being home to many diverse cultures. ECD is huge priority for WKKF in New Mexico, with a special commitment to Native communities and Native languages and cultures.

Successful WKKF grantees may provide entry points for BWF to consider. Funded ECD programs include:

- Jemez Pueblo Education Department: WKKF's 2015-16 grant of \$125,000 will, "Strengthen Towa language immersion implementation for Native American children in Head Start in Jemez Pueblo, N.M., by implementing a research-based Jemez curriculum with supports, professional development and trainings." This language immersion program is starting to achieve results, and is receiving statewide and nationwide recognition. The community is highly engaged, and is helping to drive the priorities around the integration of language and culture into the program. Jemez Pueblo has a strong reputation as leader in New Mexico.
- Keres Children's Learning Center at Cochiti Pueblo: WKKF's 2015-16 grant of \$125,000 will, "Enable the organization to achieve its mission of creating a linguistically and culturally rich learning environment for Cochiti Pueblo children by providing general operating support." This Keres language immersion serves pre-k to age 6 children using the Montessori method. Grounded in community and cultural values, this program is seen as an innovator. WKKF is assisting this grantee to begin sustainability planning.
- To'Hajiilee Community School Board of Education, Inc.: WKKF's 2016-17 grant of \$112,000 will, "Improve educational and social outcomes for Navajo Native American children through enabling them To'Hajiilee Community Schools to plan, pilot and implement Dine' language and culture revitalization efforts throughout their early childhood systems ." Located on the Navajo Nation Reservation, this program began

when the community assumed responsibility for the Head Start program. To start the pre-K program, the community brokered an agreement with the state of New Mexico for resources. The school emphasizes the Navajo language and culture.

- Pueblo of San Felipe: WKKF's 2016-18 grant of \$198,036 will, "Improve educational and social outcomes of San Felipe Pueblo Native children by developing and implementing a Keres language immersion strategic plan, pre-natal through 12th grade; piloting efforts at San Felipe Head Start; supporting family engagement and providing teacher professional development." The "First Born" component sends home care workers to work with the family and pre-K child, promoting health education, a healthy environment and a positive learning atmosphere.
- Home visitation according to Kellogg is among some of the most promising ECD practices that they are seeing in New Mexico Native communities. According to Alvin, "evidence really backs home visitation as a model that can be transformational for Native children and mothers." Moreover, he shared that in communities like San Felipe Pueblo where there can be a waiting list for Head Start and no other options for ECD, home visitation can fill that gap.
- Alvin also shared that New Mexico reservation and urban communities are also struggling with creating a pipeline of qualified teachers, especially those with Native language skills, much less retaining them due to similar barriers that other interviewees expressed regarding low salaries and other challenges.

### Navajo Head Start

Navajo Head Start strives toward providing high quality programming emphasizing Navajo language and culture, with built-in provisions for educator and staff professional development and evaluation/assessment. The program is prevented from serving additional children by the lack of additional facilities. In fact, most of their current facilities are 40 years old and in need of replacement. Significant capital funds would be needed to address this need. An interim or alternative point of intervention could be the re-introduction of home-based programming to train parents in early childhood development service provision.

In July 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting spoke with Dr. Lamont Yazzie, Director of Educational Services at Navajo Head Start. He has been with the program for five years.

Dr. Yazzie is a faculty member at Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. He holds a Ph.D. in Education and School supervision from Arizona State University, a Masters of Education Leadership with a focus on policy from Northern Arizona University, and Bachelors in Liberal Studies from the College of Business with a Minor in Native Language from Northern Arizona University. He currently is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year doctoral student at Arizona State University in Social Justice, with this status supporting his research on Navajo children and their needs.

The Navajo Nation manages its Head Start program and has done so since the inception of Head Start. During the 2014 federal Review of Head Start programs, Navajo Head Start was found to have the most comprehensive educational program in the United States because of its ability to individualize services for the children.

The program has enrolled 2,105 children, aged birth to age 5, who are served through 96 classrooms across the reservation. 99% of children served are Navajo.

Navajo Head Start always has a waiting list. While Dr. Yazzie did not have the specific number of the overall waiting list, he mentioned that in one of the more populated Navajo communities, there is a waiting list of 274 children, with only 40 slots available.

Data collected in 2010 indicated that Head Start was serving only 7% of eligible children on the reservation, with an additional 5% of children served through child care providers and other early childhood development providers. Together, these programs are serving 12% of eligible children, leaving 88% of children unserved.

Navajo Head Start bases its teaching methodology on *The Creative Curriculum*<sup>49</sup>, with that curriculum augmented to be taught in English and in Navajo and to include Navajo-specific topic areas (e.g., natural world, food, arts, culture, stories, music, etc.). The curriculum aligns with the Head Start early learning framework, and has been adopted for school readiness.

They are using the Teaching Strategies Gold<sup>50</sup> assessment tool that is based on 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Since they are compiling their data so far on paper, they are striving toward training the educators to use the online version of Gold that will be more efficient. In the meantime, they are ensuring that the educators have a solid understanding of the theory of assessments.

In accordance with a July 1995 Navajo Nation Executive Order that orders the use of the Navajo language in the Navajo Head Start program, the Navajo language is an essential element of teaching. Most classrooms are taught in English and in Navajo, but two or three are Navajo immersion.

Dr. Yazzie is working to update a 1992 study conducted by Dr. Paul Platero, Navajo linguist, which found that 17.69% of Navajo Head Start children were Navajo monolingual, 27.69% were bilingual and 54.35% were English monolingual. In updating this data in the past year, Dr. Yazzie has found that they have 0% of children who are Navajo monolingual, 4% bi-lingual and 96% English monolingual.

Reinvigorating the Navajo language with children in the classrooms is a priority, with the obvious step being professional development for instructors. In fall 2016, they will assess the abilities of their educators to read, write, speak and understand Navajo so that they may identify which other classrooms have the potential to offer Navajo language immersion. The

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<sup>49</sup> <http://teachingstrategies.com/curriculum/>

<sup>50</sup> [http://shop.teachingstrategies.com/page/GOLD-assessment-online.cfm#product\\_overview](http://shop.teachingstrategies.com/page/GOLD-assessment-online.cfm#product_overview)

Navajo Head Start has just completed a set of videos, based on materials written in the 1990s, for staff and instructors to learn to speak situational Navajo with the children, as they are on the bus, hanging up coats, entering the classroom, etc. In fall 2016, staff will implement what they have learned on the videos at Head Start. Items in the classroom are already labeled in English and in Navajo.

Professional development and retention of educators and employees has been a priority. Through tuition assistance and partnerships with Navajo Technical University, Arizona State University, University of New Mexico – Gallup, Dine College, Navajo Head Start has greatly increased the number of teachers with Bachelor’s degrees (from 1 two years ago to 64 this year). At Arizona State University, Navajo Head Start has three cohorts of students working toward Bachelor’s degrees, with the first cohort graduating in December 2016, the second in May 2017 and the third in May 2018.

Data collected in 2010 indicated that Head Start was serving only 7% of eligible children on the reservation, with an additional 5% of children served through child care providers and other early childhood development providers.

All other teachers without a Bachelor’s degree yet are in coursework toward that goal. Salaries also have been increased over the years, from \$14/hour for an entry-level teacher to \$21/hour. Aides previously made \$9/hour and now make \$13-\$14/hour. Bus drivers are cross-trained to help in classrooms, and now make \$13/hour, up from \$8/hour. Despite these benefits, the local school district competes with Navajo Head Start with a better offer.

In the past year, Navajo Head Start educators have been trained in a uniform curriculum system and assessments to ensure consistent collection of data.

*Areas of greatest need:* Most facilities where Head Start programs are located are more than 40 years old and are at the end of their life expectancy. Lack of sufficient facility space is the main reason why Navajo Head Start cannot serve additional children. Navajo Head Start does not

own the buildings where their services are offered. The buildings belong to Navajo Nation Chapters (similar to towns) that have agreements with Navajo Head Start to designate that land and building for Head Start use. That land and buildings do not have transferability to other organizations or uses.

Most parents prefer sending their children to the Head Start classrooms because of the socialization and academic benefit, so two years ago Navajo Head Start had eliminated a home based- program where 1.5 hours weekly training was provided to parents on how best to work

with their child. It could be a cost-efficient option to resurrect this program in order to serve more children, and children in an area without a sufficient number of children to warrant having a Head Start classroom (i.e., in one Navajo community there are only six eligible children).

Securing qualified bus drivers is also an issue, with these positions advertised continuously. All Head Start classrooms are facing a bus driver shortage. Most children are provided transportation to Head Start because many parents don't have a vehicle.

Because of the bureaucracy inherent in working within a government structure, Navajo Head Start is considering removing itself from the Navajo Nation government and forming its own Board of Directors. Forming a tribally-sanctioned educational authority<sup>51</sup> would provide Navajo Head Start with more autonomy, but the Navajo Nation would still be the recipient of any grant funding. However, the Board would manage the grant.

*Partnerships:* Navajo Head Start strives to coordinate efforts with State of Arizona and New Mexico Pre-K efforts, other ECD providers (e.g., Bureau of Indian Education (under the U.S. Department of the Interior), private child care providers and other child care/development programs (whose goals might be child care rather than child development). Coordination of these efforts is a constant challenge.

Health care, food distribution and clothing distribution are provided in partnership with other agencies.

A Parent Policy Council advises Navajo Head Start. Local parent committees represent all 96 classrooms, and send an elected representative to the regional parent committee which then sends an elected representative to serve on the overall Council.

### Educare Winnebago

Educare Winnebago is the only early childhood education program in the Winnebago community. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, it is separate from the Winnebago Tribe, and its board includes a diversity of community representatives. The Winnebago Tribe has a reputation for leveraging federal grants that support tribal and Educare Winnebago programming. A lack of additional facilities prevents Educare Winnebago from serving additional children. Educare Winnebago staff members need assistance securing professional development and higher education opportunities.

In July 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting spoke with Amy LaPointe, Co-Director of Educare Winnebago.

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<sup>51</sup> The Navajo Preparatory School in Farmington, NM and Dine College are examples of tribally-sanctioned educational authorities.

Educare Winnebago is a new state-of-the-art early childhood education school opened October 17, 2014 to serve children on the Winnebago Indian Reservation in northeast Nebraska. Educare Winnebago provides infants, toddlers and preschoolers with research-based, year-round early childhood education. To enroll, families must meet Head Start income requirements.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Educare Winnebago's board includes two Winnebago Tribe tribal council members, Educare Winnebago's CEO, the local school superintendent, representatives from the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, and a representative from St. Augustine School (with this last member in transition due to turnover).

Educare Winnebago's inception involved many stakeholders – tribal council, public school, state of Nebraska, etc. – as the community felt their children were falling behind and found it difficult to get them evaluated properly.

A big part of the Educare model is to promote the families' as children's first teachers. Family support workers work with families, with each family completing a family needs assessment and outlining family partnership goals. Educare Winnebago focuses on parents and helps to link them to resources in the community.

Educare Winnebago has the capacity to serve 191 children aged birth to 5 in 16 classrooms (of which nine are for ages 0-3 and seven are for pre-K and Head Start children).

At capacity, Educare Winnebago could serve 90 Head Start children, 29 Pre-K children, and 72 Early Head Start (ages 0-3) children. Each of the nine Early Head Start classrooms could serve up to eight children with three staff members. The other classrooms could serve up to 17 children with three staff members.

Early Head Start children are served year-round. Current (as of summer 2016) enrollment is at capacity, totaling 72, with an additional 15-20 children receiving child care.

In August 2016, an additional 119 children aged 3-5 will enroll, bringing the program to capacity.

There are about 20 children on the Early Head Start waiting list. Many parents don't bother to sign their child up for the waiting list, as they do not think they have a chance of getting in.

Educare Winnebago primarily receives federal funding from Head Start, Early Head Start and the Winnebago Tribe Early Childhood Fund. The Winnebago Tribe owns the building in which Educare Winnebago is located, with the Tribe and the Buffet Early Childhood Fund splitting the cost of the building operations. Educare Winnebago's annual budget is approximately \$2.6 million. Federal subsidies help with reimbursing costs for food and child care. There are 48 employees in the classrooms, with close to 65-70 employees total.

Educare Winnebago bases its teaching methodology on *The Creative Curriculum*<sup>52</sup>. The curriculum aligns with the Head Start early learning framework, and has been adopted for school readiness.

Through a U.S. Department of Education Early Learning Initiative Grant, teachers separate from Educare Winnebago teach the children daily about the Ho-Chunk language and culture.

Educare Winnebago has a contract with the University of Nebraska Medical Center to assess the children twice yearly on language, social, emotional and school readiness skills. They are using the Teaching Strategies Gold<sup>53</sup> assessment tool that is based on 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Educare Winnebago has been pleased with the scores received by their children and their educators so far, with the scores showing an increase over time.

Educare Winnebago works with the tribal health department so that children are assessed comprehensively and age-appropriately for vision, nutrition, mental health, hearing, etc. Early Head Start children are screened at two, four, six, nine, 12 and 15 months of age. Children aged 3-5 are screened once annually.

One special education staff member is provided through the public school system to serve children aged 0-5. Teachers can refer children in need, with individualized assistance provided to address any issues or barriers a child is encountering. A number of Educare Winnebago children have delayed development issues.

Ms. LaPointe has worked with Head Start for 11.5 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree plus 24 credits toward a Master's degree.

*Areas of greatest need:* The main factor restricting the program from serving additional children is the lack of facilities. There are no other classrooms on the reservation that are even appropriate to provide child care.

Other issues are staff professional development, staff recruitment and staff retention.

Educare Winnebago requires every lead teacher (one per classroom) to have a Bachelor's degree; associate teachers are required to have at least an Associate's degree (with a Bachelors preferred); and aides are required to have appropriate training. Educare Winnebago had begun working with the University of Nebraska –Kearney to assist educators to secure Bachelor's degrees, but discontinued this approach since payment of tuition and books was an issue. Tuition and education funding would be welcomed.

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<sup>52</sup> <http://teachingstrategies.com/curriculum/>

<sup>53</sup> [http://shop.teachingstrategies.com/page/GOLD-assessment-online.cfm#product\\_overview](http://shop.teachingstrategies.com/page/GOLD-assessment-online.cfm#product_overview)



Working at Educare Winnebago is a demanding job. Standards are high, and data capturing for assessing children, along with lesson plans, require a high level of detail and constant maintenance. Educare Winnebago chronically needs qualified and consistent staff.

### U.S. Department of Education grantee serving the Winnebago community

In July 2016, Echo Hawk Consulting spoke with Diane Wolfe, Director of Digital Learning Tools/Distance Learning Services, employed by Educational Service Unit #2 of the State of Nebraska.

Ms. Wolfe is the contact person for a 3-year 2014 Demonstration Grants for Indian Children from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). The grant, active during 2015 through 2018, was made to Educational Services Unit #1 for the project, *Students and Teachers Achieving Readiness (STAR)*. Educational Service Unit #1 is partnering with four K-12 Native American school districts and the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska to provide a program to support high quality preschool programs for 3 and 4 year olds. One of the objectives is for 100% of incoming kindergarteners from the STAR Pre-K program to be as prepared as their peers across the state. Four sites include public school district locations on Indian Reservations in Northeast Nebraska, including the Winnebago Indian Reservation (Winnebago, NE).

The demonstration grant includes early childhood development through high school in four schools that had existing ECD programs through state grants or through partnerships with Head Start. The grant covered only services to 3 and 4 year olds. The overall purpose was to improve vocabulary development through implementation of *The Creative Curriculum*®, (providing educator and parent trainings and purchase of startup kits) and through purchase of I-pads (loaded with an online library and applications).

The Winnebago component included some Native American topics and books on those I-pads provided.

When the original project was developed, it was envisioned as a consortium for all four school districts and was written in cooperation with school-employed teachers. At that time, the Educare program at Winnebago was just getting started. If it was developed now, it would involve the Winnebago Tribe, Head Start, and other stakeholders. Because the DOE grant was only for the public schools, the equipment purchased and training provided was only provided to state-funded efforts, creating inequities in how some students access technology and information.

The intention of the grant program is for the gains provided to be sustainable, in that participating schools will continue to implement *The Creative Curriculum* past the DOE grant period, with the responsibility of replacing or purchasing new equipment as the responsibility of the schools.

Early results from the grant reveal improvement in vocabulary development and growth in the majority of students.

The Winnebago Tribe education efforts are described as proactive, involved with ECD and the school district.

### American Indian College Fund

Echo Hawk Consulting spoke with Dr. Tarajeen Yazzie, Program Officer at the American Indian College Fund. Because AICF has worked with tribal colleges and universities for the past several years on pilot programs, BWF may consider this organization as a resource for relationship building.

With 2016-17 WKKF funding of \$1.2 million, AICF has just begun the program, “Restorative Teachings: A Tribal College and University collaborative” to strengthen systems of care and learning with Native families and children. AICF will work with Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (Michigan), Sitting Bull College (North Dakota, Northwest Indian College (Washington), Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (New Mexico), and Ilisagvik College (Alaska) to implement an early childhood education (ECE) initiative that draws upon the child development knowledge from within Native communities melded with the best practices identified in the field of early childhood education. This community-based ECE initiative uses a multi-phase approach to developing long-term commitment and shared responsibility for the development of high-quality early childhood educational opportunities for Native children and their families, by aiming to design culturally-responsive and adapted ECE systems, build stronger family engagement programs, and support Native family economic security directly through partnerships and access to higher education. Through local and national partnerships, tribal communities can benefit from restored access to systems, knowledge, approaches, networks, and strategies that contribute to sustained engagement resulting in improved early learning opportunities and health benefits for Native families and their children.

Their 2011-15 program, “Wakanyeja 'Sacred Little Ones' - Tribal College Readiness and Success by Third Grade” was funded with a \$5 million grant from W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The program worked to, “Substantially improve learning outcomes for vulnerable children living in Native communities by working with select Tribal Colleges to develop programs in school readiness and success by third grade.” The 4 tribal colleges selected were: Ilisagvik College (Barrow, AK); College of Menominee Nation (Keshena, WI); Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (Albuquerque, NM); and Northwest Indian College (Bellingham, WA). The initiative addressed the following five domains:

1. Improve cognitive and non-cognitive skill acquisition among American Indian children
2. Improve early childhood teacher education quality in Native communities by partnering with post-secondary teacher education programs at tribal colleges
3. Bridge early childhood education Pre-K transition to K-3 schooling
4. Integrate Native language(s) and culture(s) into curriculum development and instruction for teacher preparation programming, early childhood education centers, and K-3 settings
5. Empower families and communities to act as agents of change in education for their children

Since this program ended in January 2016, no final reports or conclusions are publicly available yet.

### Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

In 2015, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis launched the Center for Indian Country Development whose mission is, “To help self-governing communities of American Indians attain their economic development goals.” One of their objectives under their Education initiatives is to, “Explore synergies between high-quality early childhood development programs and Native language preservation initiatives.”

On October 5-6, 2016 in Minneapolis, the Center will host the **Early Childhood Development in Indian Country Conference** to highlight both scientific research and successful early child development programs within the American Indian experience. They also will share strategies to elevate early childhood development as a policy priority in Indian country and sustain funding. In attendance will be leaders of early childhood development programs and tribal government representatives, tribal leaders, elders, non-profit organizations and government agencies that manage funding and technical assistance for early childhood development initiatives in Indian country.

Echo Hawk Consulting facilitated an introduction to the Federal Reserve team organizing the ECD conference. As a result, BWF staff have been invited to not only attend the conference but to present on the funders panel as part of the meeting agenda.

### TRIBAL REDI (RESEARCH-BASED, DEVELOPMENTALLY INFORMED) PROJECT

The BWF team and Echo Hawk Consulting spoke with Cynthia Weaver, Senior Associate, The Annie E. Casey Foundation and Janet Welsh, Ph.D., Research Associate, Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development, Penn State University Extension. They presented a proposed pilot of REDI, a 34-week school readiness program serving 3-5 year olds that adds evidence based components to existing Head Start curricula. The cornerstone of REDI is the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)\_curriculum which provides a social-emotional learning component. They are seeking implementation funding to pilot, secure feedback for adaptation and then finalize the program in four Native communities in South Dakota. The Annie E. Casey Foundation has committed funding for the program’s evaluation, but the implementation funding is not yet secured.

The team’s relationship building with the communities targeted primarily depend on colleagues at South Dakota State University, with their own personal interactions limited to only one of the communities so far. The Penn State team also seemed to have limited knowledge of the tribes and community ECD stakeholders to be served through the project.

Because of this lack of knowledge and direct relationship development with the tribal Head Starts and communities to be served, Echo Hawk Consulting does not recommend further BWF involvement at this time. However, Echo Hawk Consulting does recommend that BWF staff

continue to build a relationship with the Cynthia Weaver and the Annie E. Casey Foundation as they could be a strategic partner in the future around supporting research and evaluation around promising and evidence-based ECD programs that BWF may be investing in sometime in the future.

# SUMMARY OF NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ECD BEST PRACTICES AND MODELS FROM SECONDARY RESEARCH SOURCES

Echo Hawk Consulting reviewed numerous research studies and articles on ECD in Native communities. The summaries are included in this section, with our conclusions drawn about the overall recommendations and highlights below.

This section is divided into a few sub-sections:

1. Best practices for ECD in Native (and other) communities;
2. Review of research studies and articles on ECD in Native communities;
3. Other research in process on Native American ECD;
4. Review of models of ECD in Native communities; and
5. Review of research studies and models of ECD in non-Native communities.

Documents reviewed included:

**“How Should Young Indigenous Children be prepared for Learning? A Vision of Early Childhood Education for Indigenous Children.”**

Written by Mary Eunice Romero-Little

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Published on [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org).

June 6, 2016

**“Supporting Native Indian Preschoolers and their Families: Family, School, Community Partnerships”**

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**“American Indian and Alaska Natives, Charting a New Course for Native Education”**

Focus On Series from the National Education Association (NEA)

2010-2011

**“Early childhood Native language immersion develops minds, revitalizes cultures”**

By Rob Grunewald

Published in *“Community Dividend”* the online publication of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis  
August 19, 2016

**“Head Start: Strategies To Improve Outcomes For Children Living In Poverty”**

by Craig T. Ramey and Sharon Landesman Ramey

Published in 2010 by the Brookings Institute, a nonprofit public policy organization.

**“An Analysis of High Quality Head Start Programs, Recommendations from the Lucas County Head Start Task Force”**

Published by the Toledo (OH) Community Foundation

March 25, 2012

Best practices for ECD in Native (and other) communities recommended in these sources are:

### **1. Parent involvement**

Schools that infuse Native culture into the school climate via the curricula, staff expertise, and school activities see a corresponding increase in the participation and interest level of Native families. Outreach efforts to Native parents and elders can be practiced in regularly scheduled/standing check-in meetings and by engaging parents/families with volunteer opportunities in the classroom.<sup>54</sup> This lends itself to more interest in the child's education.

### **2. Hire American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) staff**

Many Native students feel isolated and invisible. They would benefit from the presence of Native educators who can serve as advocates and role models for students and as liaisons for Native families who feel uncomfortable navigating the school system<sup>55</sup>

### **3. Model respect for AI/AN cultures and languages.<sup>56</sup>**

Incorporate Native culture and contributions into classroom projects, the school curriculum, and after-school activities. When talking about the various ethnic and racial groups that compose the U.S. population, always include American Indians and Alaska Natives, who are all too often left out of "national" statistics.

### **4. Qualified and accredited teaching staff**

Highly knowledgeable, stable leadership is key to a program's success. Program leaders had strong backgrounds in early childhood development and a strong primary professional commitment to the successful implementation and rigorous evaluation of the program.<sup>57</sup>

### **5. Sufficient Dosage.<sup>58</sup>**

The amount of the programs was well matched to the program goals and needs of the participants. Dosage refers to the hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and number of years. (Often the dosage of these model programs is vastly reduced when others try to replicate them in other community settings. Sometimes this "watering down" is attributed to the

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<sup>54</sup> Jones, Jacqueline; Maldonado-Mancebo, Tami; McWilliams, M. Susan; Szczepaniak, Paula S. "Supporting Native Indian Preschoolers and their Families: Family, School, Community Partnerships". *Young Children*, Vol. 66, No. 6, Nov 2011.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> National Education Association publication. *American Indian and Alaska Natives: Charting a New Course for Native Education*, Focus On series, 2010-2011, p.1.

<sup>57</sup> Ramey, Craig T. and Ramey, Sharon Landesman. "Head Start: Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Children Living in Poverty." *Investing in Young Children: New Directions in Federal Preschool and Early Childhood Policy*. Ed. by Haskins, Ron and Barnett, Steven W. Brookings and NIEER, 2010. 59-67.

<sup>58</sup> Ramey, Craig T. and Ramey, Sharon Landesman. "Head Start: Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Children Living in Poverty." *Investing in Young Children: New Directions in Federal Preschool and Early Childhood Policy*. Ed. by Haskins, Ron and Barnett, Steven W. Brookings and NIEER, 2010. 59-67.

emphasis placed on serving large numbers of children, regardless of the dosage or intensity of the services actually delivered.)

Exemplary programs offer pre-K that runs 6-6.5 hours/day, for 180-205 days/year. Another offers full-day (6.5 hours/day, 180 days/year) and part-day (3 hours/day, 180 days/year) options. It is clear from the exemplars and consistent with research findings that within high-quality pre-K programs the dosage required is related to the size of the achievement gap that must be closed for each low-income child.<sup>59</sup>

## **6. Overall health and well-being of each child**

High quality programs for young children help ensure they have a medical and dental home for receiving well-child care and treatment. Regular screening and assessment of children's vision, hearing, nutrition and health help identify concerns early and link children to additional evaluation and services.<sup>60</sup>

The summaries of the articles follow.

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<sup>59</sup> Minervino, Jim. "The Essential Elements of High Quality Pre-K: An Analysis of Four Exemplar Programs" Lessons from Research and the Classroom: Implementing High Quality Pre-K that Makes a Difference for Young Children. September 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Lucas County Head Start Task Force. "Key Program Components & Task Force Recommendations." *An Analysis of High Quality Head Start Programs: Recommendations from the Lucas County Head Start Task Force*. 2012. p.18.



**“How Should Young Indigenous Children be prepared for Learning? A Vision of Early Childhood Education for Indigenous Children.”**

Written by Mary Eunice Romero-Little

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[http://www.kclcmontessori.org/uploads/3/4/0/4/34041341/romero-little\\_a\\_vision\\_for\\_early\\_childhood\\_education.pdf](http://www.kclcmontessori.org/uploads/3/4/0/4/34041341/romero-little_a_vision_for_early_childhood_education.pdf)

Many Native American children that enter school at the Kindergarten level are deemed “unprepared” by Westernized standards. The values and cultural teachings that have learned since birth are often not accounted for when standardized testing is the measurement for how a student is prepared for school. They often possess ways of learning that vary greatly from mainstream ideas of learning. This issue is often seen as “the heart of the educational problem for many Indigenous students.”<sup>61</sup>

Romero-Little argues that the early years from birth to the enrollment of school, Kindergarten in most cases, are the *family years*.<sup>62</sup> This is the time in which the family is responsible for building a child’s foundation in cultural curriculum and language.<sup>63</sup> Programs that see cultural teachings in their students and the lack of mainstream ways of learning must not see that as a disadvantage to Native children. Instead, they must find ways to develop early education programming that is tailored to their community needs and goals for their children. In order for these students to be successful, their communities “must be clear about their beliefs and socialization practices and they must consider whether anything needs to be modified in order to prepare their children more successfully for their eventual entry into the society’s schools.”<sup>64</sup>

In order to implement this approach in early education practices, teachers and communities need to ask themselves the following questions in order to approach a community-specific, culturally sound program:<sup>65</sup>

1. Will the approach allow the Indigenous language to be used and developed?

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<sup>61</sup> Romero-Little, Mary Eunice. “How Should Young Indigenous Children be Prepared for Learning? A Vision of Early Childhood Education for Indigenous Children.” *Journal of American Indian Education*, Vol. 49, No. 1/2, 2010, page 3.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

2. Will it build a strong foundation for life-long learning by developing essential cognitive, social, and learning skills that will allow children to function successfully in community and mainstream learning environments?
3. Are the modes of learning promoted congruent with the community's approaches to teaching and learning?
4. Are the behavioral expectations congruent with the community's beliefs about how children should behave and function in learning environments?
5. Are the human relationships and interactional practices consistent with those that are promoted in the community?
6. Are parents encouraged to play a continuing role in the education of their children?

In conclusion, early childhood educators and curriculum builders should respect and encourage the development of a curriculum based on each community's needs. In doing so, they will be supporting Native communities by supporting each Native child's parents and families. This will ensure that "this unity will not only enrich the early learning experiences of children but will contribute to the sustainability of a community's language and culture."<sup>66</sup> This commitment is key to preparing every Native student for entry into school.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 22.

## “Preserving Native American languages by teaching the youngest students”

By Susan Frey | June 6, 2016

Published on [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org).

Edsource works to engage Californians on key education challenges with the goal of enhancing learning success.

<https://edsource.org/2016/preserving-native-american-languages-by-teaching-the-youngest-students/565007>

This article recognizes the role Native languages play in early education. In California, steps are being taken to ensure that Native language is being introduced into early childhood education programs as “slightly less than 2 percent of the children enrolled in 2015 in Native American Head Start programs in Region XI, which includes California, spoke a primary home language that was a Native language.”<sup>67</sup>

In spite of this, language programs are facing several obstacles in addressing the incorporation of Native language into the curriculum that include the loss of elderly Native speakers, government imposed regulations, and complexity of some languages.<sup>68</sup> Another unique issue highlighted is the reluctance of community members, often in older individuals, who have a learned distrust of the government. For the elder speakers, many of these bad experiences are the result of boarding school trauma. Therefore, they are weary of submitting themselves to mandatory background checks to work in schools. This leads them to feel that the “government is trying to control and dictate how they can teach their own culture to their own people.”<sup>69</sup>

Additional barriers include the requirement of a teaching certificate or degree in some cases in order to teach or become a teaching assistant. The elder speakers of a community are less likely to seek out higher education in order to enter the classroom. California has taken on this issue and created a uniquely specialized teaching credential for American Indian culture.<sup>70</sup> The credential allows individuals who have attained it to teach in state preschools and K-12 schools. However, it does not allow for teaching in Head Start programs.

Teachers often cite the lack of time in the classroom and complexity of these languages in their efforts to bring Native languages to early childhood education. Federally regulated classroom curriculums leave little time for Native colors, numbers, and basic concepts to be taught. Additionally, often these languages are complex and not easy to teach.

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<sup>67</sup> Frey, Susan. “Preserving Native American Languages by Teaching the Youngest Students”. *Ed Source: Highlighting Strategies for Student Success*. <https://edsource.org/2016/preserving-native-american-languages-by-teaching-the-youngest-students/565007>. 25 Aug 2016.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

## **“Supporting Native Indian Preschoolers and their Families: Family, School, Community Partnerships”**

M. Susan McWilliams, Tami Maldonado-Mancebo,  
Paula S. Szczepaniak, and Jacqueline Jones  
*Young Children*, Vol. 66, No. 6  
November 2011

This article highlights the incorporation of an EDC program for urban Native children. It details the Native Indian Center Education (NICE) program in Omaha, Nebraska. This program lies within the “school district and partners with families to provide Native-centric educational opportunities for preschool children.”<sup>71</sup> It is important to note that many urban Native children have vastly different experiences growing up in regards to their Native identity and culture. As such, children in the city tend to have less connection to their Native culture and language given their physical location off the reservation. Parents of young children born and raised in urban areas tend to pass on the loss of culture to their children. Also in urban areas, there is the varied tribes that intermarry and create families that identify with multiple tribes. Urban areas face the unique obstacle of having to satisfy many tribes in one location as opposed to sole and undivided attention on one tribal culture.

Family-school-community engagement is participatory, meaningful, sensitive, collaborative, and connected. The NICE preschool strives to achieve six components of effective partnerships in its program: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community (Epstein 2008).<sup>72</sup> The NICE preschool curriculum focuses on the family as an integral part of children’s cultural learning experience. The program incorporates Native-centric materials in the classrooms and frequently invites families to participate.

### **Best practices in order to maximize family engagement:**

#### **Monthly parent-child interactions.**

Afternoon activities in the classroom include a culturally relevant craft or arts project, such as learning traditional dances, building family totems, and writing family stories; an engaging, developmentally appropriate language and literacy activity, like the two mentioned earlier; and a snack from the community garden.

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<sup>71</sup> Jones, Jacqueline; Maldonado-Mancebo, Tami; McWilliams, M. Susan; Szczepaniak, Paula S. “Supporting Native Indian Preschoolers and their Families: Family, School, Community Partnerships”. *Young Children*, Vol. 66, No. 6, Nov 2011, pg. 35.

<sup>72</sup> Epstein, J.L., ed. 2008. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Corwin.

**Districtwide Native family nights.**

These evening events draw families with children from preschool through grade 12. Family nights, such as the story night with Tim Tingle, encourage community fellowship, offering a meal followed by age- and content-appropriate programming for children and adults.

**School gardens.**

Gardening is another hands-on family involvement activity. To build children's strong connections with the earth, the program regularly welcomes parents and family members in the preparation, planting, and tending of the Native healing garden, outdoor classroom, and community garden.

**Annual harvest celebration and powwow.**

Gathering and uniting the preschool's extended families in meaningful ways honors native family traditions. Community elders lead the powwow, drumming, and prayers and help the children learn traditional powwow etiquette. The school sets up centers for beading and other crafts related to the harvest or the powwow.

**Volunteering**

Many parents, grandparents, and older siblings become regular classroom volunteers, adding to the familial richness and meaningful work/play of children. Parents unable to be in the classroom often fulfill requests for inexpensive classroom materials or help with project preparation tasks.

## “American Indian and Alaska Natives, Charting a New Course for Native Education”

Focus On Series from the National Education Association (NEA), 2010-2011

<http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/AIANfocus2010-2011.pdf>

This publication from National Education Association (NEA) highlights the failure of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to properly serve Native American students. It cites the focus of NCLB being largely focused on standardized testing and government regulations in classrooms that did not translate well to Native students in school.

Recent reports show that American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students have some of the highest dropout rates in the country and that Native children are the only students to show no significant progress in math and science scores since 2005 (AI/AN 8th graders had a slight increase in reading scores). In addition, American Indians and Alaska Natives are more likely than any other racial or ethnic group to be targeted for special education services, while suspension and expulsion rates for Native students are second only to those for African Americans.<sup>73</sup>

As NCLB has been shown to fail Native students, the success of incorporating “Native Ways of Knowing” has started. These methods are employed in a range of innovative programs and practices, such as offering one or more Native languages as a foreign language requirement, using reservation ecosystems to teach science, developing book-of-the-month programs that make Native-themed literature an integral part of the curriculum for all subject areas, and utilizing tribal elders to help with behavior management.<sup>74</sup>

While these methods or unique ways of incorporating Native knowledge into schools don’t automatically resolve any issues, it does open up to further suggested curricula/standards that empower Native students in a Westernized school system.

The following are best practice steps that schools can take at a district level in order to improve Native students’ experiences in the classroom:

### **1. Model respect for AI/AN cultures and languages.**

Incorporate Native culture and contributions into classroom projects, the school curriculum, and after-school activities. When talking about the various ethnic and racial groups that compose the U.S. population, always include American Indians and Alaska Natives, who are all too often left out of “national” statistics.

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<sup>73</sup> National Education Association publication. *American Indian and Alaska Natives: Charting a New Course for Native Education*, Focus On series, 2010-2011, p.1.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

## **2. Hire AI/AN staff.**

Many Native students feel isolated and invisible. They would benefit from the presence of Native educators who can serve as advocates and role models for students and as liaisons for Native families who feel uncomfortable navigating the school system.

## **3. Engage AI/AN parents and community members.**

Schools that infuse Native culture into the school climate via the curricula, staff expertise, and school activities see a corresponding increase in the participation and interest level of Native families. Some schools have found that outreach efforts to Native parents and elders on the importance of student attendance result in improved attendance rates for AI/AN students.

## **4. Clarify academic expectations and be accessible to students.**

Student Mariah Bowers testified at the Senate hearing that the educators at her tribal school distributed a book to each student clearly describing academic standards and what kind of student products were required to achieve a proficient, emerging, or advanced grade.

## **5. Establish a holistic community school.**

Tend to the physical and mental health issues, as well as academic needs, of students and their families. Provide access for afterschool and weekend activities, such as parenting and computer classes.

## **“Early childhood Native language immersion develops minds, revitalizes cultures”**

By Rob Grunewald

August 19, 2016

*Community Dividend is an online publication of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*

[https://minneapolisfed.org/publications/community-dividend/early-childhood-native-language-immersion-develops-minds-revitalizes-cultures?sc\\_campaign=16C883BC3D314E2E899021FBD04A7AF9](https://minneapolisfed.org/publications/community-dividend/early-childhood-native-language-immersion-develops-minds-revitalizes-cultures?sc_campaign=16C883BC3D314E2E899021FBD04A7AF9)

Early childhood language immersion programs are designed to meet and combat several factors present in Native communities, the loss of first language speakers and attempt to counteract many detrimental circumstances that affect healthy brain development in children.<sup>75</sup>

In order for these programs to be successful, immersion programs offer no easy fix. There are several challenges in facing the future success of Native children in these programs. A curriculum has to be developed by Native speakers and therefore teachers must present some level of fluency themselves in order to teach. From there, once children leave the early years of an immersion program, there must be ongoing support from the child’s family and surrounding community in order for the language to stick. Funding as usual always presents a challenge.

Most striking, “recent research also suggests that children who develop dual language skills may have advantages in some aspects of executive function, or the mental processes that enable planning, focusing attention, holding working memory, and juggling multiple tasks successfully.”<sup>76</sup>

In addition to the advantages that early dual language speakers, it can also help to support emotional health and social development in the child. This is an important factor especially in Native American homes where there is often negative environments. The emotional health of the child is further helped with the association language has to his/her cultural identity. A child has more self-esteem and a better sense of their “personal identity” when they have the ability to speak their Native language.

In the long run, the better sense of self and higher self-esteem can result in long-term benefits for the community. Research has shown that “high-quality early learning programs that serve

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<sup>75</sup> Grunewald, Rob. Early Childhood Native Language Immersion Develops Minds, Revitalizes Children. “Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis: Community Dividend. <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/publications/community-dividend/early-childhood-native-language-immersion-develops-minds-revitalizes-cultures>. Accessed 25 Aug 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Meltzoff, A.N. and Carlson, S.M. “Bilingual experience and executive functioning in young children,” *Developmental Science*. Vol. 11, No. 2, 2008. Pages 282–298.



vulnerable children shows that these programs can help reduce remedial education costs, increase school achievement and future earnings, and reduce crime and social costs.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Heckman, J.J., Grunewald, R., and Reynolds, A.J. “The Dollars and Cents of Investing Early: Cost-Benefit Analysis in Early Care and Education.” *Zero to Three*. Vol. 26, No. 6, 2006. Pages 10–17.

## Other research in process on Native American ECD

Several other research studies are underway, highlighting the need and opportunity for more data that will contribute to validating the Native approach to educating and caring for their very young children and/or to proliferating more programs that will be based on the best evidence that professional research has to offer.

Three of these studies in process are being undertaken by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families:

- **American Indian and Alaska Native Early Childhood Needs Assessment (AI/AN EC Needs Assessment) Design Project**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/american-indian-and-alaska-native-early-childhood-needs-assessments-design-project>

This 2014-16 project will outline a series of designs for future studies that will inform a national assessment of the unmet need for early childhood care, education, and home visiting services (prenatal to age 5) in tribal communities.

- **American Indian & Alaska Native Head Start Family & Child Experiences Survey (AI/AN FACES) Highlights**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/american-indian-alaska-native-head-start-family-child-experiences-survey-faces-highlights>

This study, begun in fall 2015, will attempt to fill the data gap to assess the service needs of the children and families in Region XI and to help inform policies and practices for addressing these needs. AI/AN FACES is designed to fill this information gap with tribal voices at the forefront. Twenty-two Region XI Head Start programs were recruited to participate in the first AI/AN FACES study, which started in fall 2015.

- **Early Care, Early Education, and Home Visiting in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities: Design Options for Assessing Early Childhood Needs**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/early-care-early-education-home-visiting-ai-an-communities-design-options-for-assessing-early-childhood-needs>

This 2014-16 report will describe three potential designs for studies to assess the needs for early care and education and home visiting among American Indian and Alaska Native children and families.

**An additional research program will contribute to the overall body of knowledge:**

- The University of Colorado/Denver's Colorado School of Public Health's Centers for American Indian/Alaska Native Health has started the American Indian & Alaska Native Head Start Research Center. No existing studies of Head Start (HS) programs have spoken to the experiences of AI/AN children, families, and programs, which is even more significant given that HS represents a particularly important type of early childhood intervention in tribal communities, serving AI/AN children across the country who make up 3.1% of all children served by HS programs. Objectives are to:
  1. Establish the infrastructure of a Center capable of starting to address the nation's needs for AI/AN Head Start research.
  2. Facilitate the conduct of research that will address the needs of AI/AN communities and their HS Programs, university-based researchers, and agencies concerned with the well-being of children and families.
  3. Develop the capacity for future research in AI/AN Head Start.

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/centers/CAIANH/aiansrc/Pages/objectives.aspx>

## Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health

### Family Spirit Program: Improving Health and Life Outcomes for the First Americans

#### Introduction:

Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health seeks to scale and enhance one of the most promising and innovative solutions to reduce major childhood and family-based health disparities affecting American Indian and Alaska Native children and families, as well as other under-resourced communities. Through their **Family Spirit** program, Johns Hopkins Center trains and employs local community members to serve as paraprofessional health workers, conducting structured in-home education with proven positive impacts on mothers' and infants'/toddlers' long term social, emotional, mental and behavioral health.

#### Family Spirit's Power to Transform Children and Families' Health and Well-Being:

Family Spirit is a strengths-based early childhood home-visiting program taught by American Indian family health coaches who are culturally embedded in their service populations. The model—including a 63-lesson toolkit used by the family health coaches, was designed over a 10-year period through a community based participatory process led by Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health in partnership with the Navajo Nation, White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache Tribes in New Mexico and Arizona.

The Center has evaluated the program through three successive randomized controlled trials, each one increasing in length and rigor, and corroborating prior findings. The evaluations have proved that Family Spirit improves parenting knowledge and self-efficacy; reduces parenting stress and maternal psychosocial risks that could impede positive parenting, including substance use and depression; and improves children's social, emotional and behavioral development.<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

Based on these findings, in 2013, Family Spirit received the highest ratings for an “evidence-based” program from the federal HOMVEE review of home-visiting program effectiveness and a 4.0 out of 4.0 for dissemination readiness from the National Registry for Evidence-Based Practices and Programs.

**How it is unique:** Family Spirit is one of the newest early childhood home-visiting programs currently being implemented in the U.S, and is the only one developed with and for American Indian communities. The latter fact has differentiated its content and impact in three essential ways:

- It includes a depth of effective education that reduces behavioral and mental health risks (substance use, depression and conduct problems for mothers and the roots of these problems for children) that increasingly pose the most severe challenges to healthy child and family development in American Indian communities.
- It is imbued with American Indian cultural values that promote mindful parenting and

approaches to holistic health across the lifespan that may be universally empowering to other cultures in the U.S. suffering from historical and modern trauma.

- It is the only evidence-based early childhood home-visiting model in the country designed to be taught expressly by paraprofessional, culturally embedded home educators. This key feature builds the local workforce in communities where nurse home visitors are too expensive and/or not culturally matched with their participants.

**Scaling:** Since Family Spirit was endorsed as an evidence-based model in 2013, the Center has scaled it to 75 tribal communities across 15 states and with 2 non-Native communities (with agencies in Chicago and St. Louis that are primarily serving African American and Latino families. The current demand for continued scaling is twice that which we can currently afford. In order to scale this further, they must digitize the Family Spirit curriculum and toolkit, using technology to make the program more nimble, tailored, impactful and cost-effective and to train more family health coaches cost-efficiently.

**Future Goals:** Currently, Family Spirit uses a printed tool kit including 63 lessons and accompanying lesson plans, a reference manual, participant workbook, supervisor implementation guide, assessment tools and an evaluation guide. By converting this to a digital platform in which the family health coaches teach from a tablet, the program could make several key advancements in impact and scaling:

**a) Family Spirit lessons could be readily tailored to address particular family challenges and needs, as well as be tailored to include key cultural assets in their own community.** Family Spirit health coaches would prescreen mothers/fathers at intake (during pregnancy), and the lessons would be prioritized to their risks and strengths. For example, first-time mothers would have more in-depth training on the basics of child care (diapering, feeding, dressing, bathing). On the other hand, second-time mothers with risky lifetime substance use and related depression would receive increased curriculum to target those risks. In addition, the home visitors could continuously screen participants for mastery, and provide booster lessons if more information is needed on any topic. They could also pull down reference information to go deeper on subjects that parents requested. This participant-focused teaching would save money and time, while increasing program impact. In terms of community level tailoring, Family Spirit already has key activity, illustrations, and cultural content flagged for non-Native communities to adapt to local value systems during the uptake process. These adaptations could be done digitally and shared as part of the training and teaching process.

**b) Johns Hopkins Center could update curriculum for all sites at any given time.** Imagine Zika virus becomes a real threat to pregnant mothers in the US. They could reach our hundreds of Family Spirit home visitors and tens of thousands of participating families immediately with urgent public health information. Or, if dietary guidelines for infants and toddlers change in 2016-2017, they can readily reflect this information in Family Spirit's clear lesson format.

c) They could train and provide technical assistance to communities more effectively, and provide some of our training of new family health coaches as distance education that is self-taught, with built-in practice and self-testing features. The self-teaching elements of the digital platform would allow them to scale more quickly.

For more information, please contact Kristen Speakman at [kspeakm1@jhu.edu](mailto:kspeakm1@jhu.edu) or visit: <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/affiliated---programs/family---spirit/>

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## **Jemez Pueblo (New Mexico) Head Start**

With a 2015-16 grant of \$125,000 from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Jemez Pueblo Department of Education focused on, “Strengthening Towa language immersion implementation for Native American children in Head Start in Jemez Pueblo, N.M., by implementing a research-based Jemez curriculum with supports, professional development and trainings.”

At Walatowa Head Start, all classes are conducted entirely in Towa (or Jemez), the Jemez Tribe’s Native language. Eight teachers work closely with cultural and traditional advisors on the reservation to teach lessons to 68 students.

Lana Toya, the program’s early childhood manager, was recently recognized by President Barack Obama as one of the top educators of the year.

Walatowa Head Start opened on the Jemez reservation in 1967. For decades, the program included some language and cultural components but these were not fully integrated until a 2006 language survey showed Towa proficiency for the first time was starting to decline among younger generations.

A 2006 language survey conducted by Dr. Eunice Romero Little put in motion the program we see today. Her survey showed that the children of the Jemez Pueblo community were learning the cultural aspects at home but did not have it set into a school setting curricula. It was found that “while many tribal communities around the country had experienced significant language loss, the Jemez had largely maintained their oral-only language through deliberate efforts to pass it down to each generation.” Due to this, Jemez Pueblo children were more culturally aware at a young age.

The Tribal Council voted to shift the preschool program to full-immersion in Towa in late 2012. About a year later, the federal office of Head Start made an official commitment to allow any Head Start program to conduct classes in a Native language.

Support by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), among others, has helped create a Towa language curriculum for the program, rooted in Jemez values. It has also provided classroom materials, staff professional development and training for community members who teach cultural lessons.

<https://www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/featured-work/nationally-recognized-new-mexico-preschool-strengthens-native-american-language-culture>

## Laguna Pueblo (New Mexico) Head Start

In November 2011, the Pueblo of Laguna's Head Start Program was named a "Center of Excellence in Early Childhood" by the Office of Head Start in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the first AI/AN Head Start to receive this distinction.

To be so designated, agencies must have active partners with other early care and education providers; collaborate with schools, child care and other community organizations to deliver comprehensive services in their respective communities. Centers for Excellence serve as models to other programs within their states and regions.

Laguna Pueblo's Head Start model is noted for:

- Use of Brazelton Touchpoints approach which is a practical approach for enhancing the competence of parents and building strong family-child relationships from before birth through the earliest years, laying a foundation for children's health development: <http://www.childrenshospital.org/centers-and-services/programs/family-connections-program/overview>
- Utilizing parent-staff interaction/reflection approaches; family support and financial literacy services.
- Focusing on enhancing the K'awaika Keres language and culture experiences for children and families.

Source:

Tenequer, Bob. "Laguna Head Start named a center of excellence" Cibola Beacon, 22 November 2011.

[http://www.cibolabeacon.com/news/laguna-head-start-named-a-center-of-excellence/article\\_3a0bc2b6-14a4-11e1-ad47-001cc4c03286.html](http://www.cibolabeacon.com/news/laguna-head-start-named-a-center-of-excellence/article_3a0bc2b6-14a4-11e1-ad47-001cc4c03286.html)



## **Tribal Home Visiting**

The following model highlights the best practice of home visitation, a transition point for children into ECD programming and an important alternative in communities where no formal ECD programming is available.

### **Office of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Early Childhood Development About Tribal Home Visiting**

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/home-visiting/tribal-home-visiting/about>

The Tribal Home Visiting Program is designed to develop and strengthen tribal capacity to support and promote the health and well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) families; expand the evidence-base around home visiting in tribal communities; and support and strengthen cooperation and linkages between programs that service AIAN children and their families.

### **Program Goals**

The goals of the Tribal Home Visiting Program include:

- Supporting the development of happy, healthy, and successful American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and families through a coordinated home visiting strategy that addresses critical maternal and child health, development, early learning, family support, and child abuse and neglect prevention needs.
- Implementing high-quality, culturally-relevant, evidence-based home visiting programs in AIAN communities.
- Expanding the evidence base around home visiting interventions with Native populations.
- Supporting and strengthening cooperation and coordination and promoting linkages among various early childhood programs, resulting in coordinated, comprehensive early childhood systems.

### **Grant Activities**

- Funds under the Tribal Home Visiting Program support:
- Conducting a needs and readiness assessment of the tribal community or communities.
- Developing a plan to address identified needs by implementing high-quality, culturally-relevant evidence-based home visiting programs.
- Providing high-quality, culturally-relevant, evidence-based home visiting services to pregnant women, expectant fathers, and parents and caregivers of children under age 5.
- Establishing, measuring, and reporting on progress toward meeting legislatively mandated benchmarks for participating children and families.
- Conducting rigorous local program evaluation activities to address local priorities and build the evidence base around home visiting in AIAN communities.

## **Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Family and Child Education (FACE) Program**

The Family and Child Education (FACE) Program has served over 38,512 participants (18,093 adults and 20,419 children) from about 15,400 Native American families since it began in 1991 by the Office of Indian Education Programs/Bureau of Indian Affairs, now the BIE. BIE brought Parents As Teachers National Center and the National Center for Family Literacy together to create this model for early childhood/parental involvement, currently in 44 BIE-funded schools. The emphasis has been on school readiness through culturally responsive education, resources and support for American Indian families with children prenatal through grade three.

### ***Home-based FACE (The Parents As Teachers Model and Foundational Curriculum)***

#### ***Personal Visits***

Families with children who are prenatal to 5 years old receive a visit in their home every week or two. Home-based educators respect parents and other caregivers, and help them to be the first and most important teachers of their children. Each visit includes: age-specific information about parenting issues, family well-being, child development, and an educational activity between the parent and the child that is often adapted to emphasize the local culture and language.

#### **Group Connection (FACE Family Circle)**

Home-based parents are invited to a group meeting at least once a month. They hear speakers on topics related to family well-being, development-centered parenting, parent-child interaction, make books and toys for their children that often include the local culture and language, participate in parent-child activities, get to know the school-based FACE staff, and learn to feel good about being at the school.

#### **Screening**

Children's developmental progress is checked two times a year. Parents are included in this look at their child's development because they know their child best. Once a year each child's hearing and vision is checked. The home-based educator also makes sure that parents have gotten all of the necessary immunizations for their child.

#### **Resource Network**

If learning or health problems are found, home-based educators help the family get additional services so the child will be able to reach their full potential. Partnerships with community agencies are developed to provide families with comprehensive services.

### ***Center-based FACE (The National Center for Family Literacy Model)***

#### **Adult Education**

While the children are receiving their educational services, the parents are busy working toward their own learning goals in several areas: education, employment, and personal and family life. Parents often want more knowledge of their culture and language so they can share

this knowledge with their children. They also want to learn how to use computers for their careers or to obtain a job, so technology skills are a major focus in the classroom.

### **Early Childhood**

The educational program for the 3 to 5 year old children focuses on literacy development, particularly prereading skills, like letter identification, the sound and letter connections, vocabulary development and learning to love books, stories and language. Children also learn how to work together, make wise choices, solve problems, follow directions, and many other skills that will help them be good students. The native culture and language are essential components of the learning environment, teaching practices and curriculum.

### **Parent Time**

Parents learn how to help their children in school. Lessons are often designed to develop knowledge of native culture and language. They gain knowledge about effective family life, child development and how to help their family be healthy. Parents learn about other services offered throughout the community that can help them achieve their goals.

### **Parent And Child Together Time (PACT Time)**

Every day, parents and children work and play together in the children's classroom for about an hour. The parents support and participate in their children's play. Parents see how their children learn best and are able to work with them effectively. The teachers are present to provide support and demonstrate effective teaching strategies. The teachers also read to the group and provide ideas that will help children learn at home.

### **The FACE Program Impact and Need for Expansion**

According to a recent study, "FACE prepares children for kindergarten by improving their school readiness skills. FACE levels the playing field for high-risk American Indian children entering kindergarten. FACE results in fewer special education placements when children reach school age."

The same study recommended providing similar opportunities for school readiness to all American Indian children by funding an additional 8-10 FACE programs each year, and by increasing funding for each from \$250,000 to \$400,000.

For more information, please see: <http://faceresources.org/index.php?page=FACE-at-a-Glance>

**“Head Start: Strategies To Improve Outcomes For Children Living In Poverty”**

by Craig T. Ramey and Sharon Landesman Ramey

Published in 2010 by the Brookings Institute, a nonprofit public policy organization.

This paper was published as a chapter in the volume

**Investing in Young Children: New Directions in *Federal Preschool and Early Childhood Policy*, edited by Ron Haskins and W. Steven Barnett (Brookings and NIEER, 2010.)**

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2010/10/13-investing-in-young-children-haskins/1013\\_investing\\_in\\_young\\_children\\_haskins\\_ch5.PDF](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2010/10/13-investing-in-young-children-haskins/1013_investing_in_young_children_haskins_ch5.PDF)

Craig Ramey is the Founding Director of the Georgetown University Center on Health and Education (with Sharon Ramey) and Distinguished Professor of Health Studies and Psychiatry at Georgetown University.

Sharon Landesman Ramey is the Founding Director of the Georgetown University Center on Health and Education (with Craig Ramey) and the Susan H. Mayer Professor of Child and Family Studies and Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University.

Table 1: Some Hallmarks of Successful Early Childhood Interventions that Produced Major and Lasting Benefits for Children under 5 Living in Poverty

- 1. Highly knowledgeable, stable leadership.** Program leaders had strong backgrounds in early childhood development and a strong primary professional commitment to the successful implementation and rigorous evaluation of the program.
- 2. Program grounded in scientific evidence about how young children learn.** The content of the programs was based on existing scientific findings and scientific theory about how young children develop and the strategies that promote optimal learning at different ages and stages, rather than ideology or philosophy alone.
- 3. Multi-faceted program (not academic only).** The programs addressed the complexity of children’s needs by offering multiple components that were individually tailored to children’s needs in the domains of language, cognition, social, emotional, and physical development. The programs also coordinated with the children’s families and helped to improve the family’s life situation.
- 4. Expert outside review and community support prior to launching.** Experts (through external scientific peer review) and/or local and community leaders actively supported the programs before they were launched, and remained supportive throughout.

**5. Adequate funding to implement the planned program.** Peer reviewers agreed that funding was “in the ballpark” to permit implementing the programs and services as planned, and thus to potentially achieve the desired results. (Note: at time of launch, the funding was not necessarily known to be stable for the future course of the programs).

**6. High levels of initial staff training followed by ongoing professional development.** Program leaders and staff had a thorough grounding in the program, the science behind it, what they were supposed to do and how to do it well, why they were supposed to do it, and what measurable educational processes and outcomes were expected.

**7. Sufficient intensity or “dosage” of the program to meet children’s needs.** The amount of the programs was well matched to the program goals and needs of the participants. Dosage refers to the hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and number of years. (Often the dosage of these model programs is vastly reduced when others try to replicate them in other community settings. Sometimes this “watering down” is attributed to the emphasis placed on serving large numbers of children, regardless of the dosage or intensity of the services actually delivered).

**8. High levels of individual participation.** Attendance of children was strongly supported throughout the programs. Potential barriers such as need for reliable transportation for children and parents were anticipated and provided.

**9. Rigorous documentation, regular assessment, and timely reporting.** Many aspects related to implementation of the programs were openly and clearly documented. Measuring the progress of individual children was considered vital to the programs, and the results were analyzed in ways that ensured high integrity and objectivity. Findings about the impact of the programs were frequently reported and published.

## **“An Analysis of High Quality Head Start Programs, Recommendations from the Lucas County Head Start Task Force”**

Published by the Toledo (OH) Community Foundation

March 25, 2012

[http://www.toledocf.org/clientuploads/doc/HeadStart\\_Task\\_Force\\_D.pdf](http://www.toledocf.org/clientuploads/doc/HeadStart_Task_Force_D.pdf)

Overall, exemplary Head Start programs share a number of key characteristics, including:

- Recognition by external entities for quality and innovation, such as the HHS Centers for Excellence in Early Childhood, accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC);
- Integration of core features so each informs the other, such as using program practices to inform research and research to inform practices;
- Public-private partnerships to fund, deliver and sustain comprehensive, high quality services to at-risk children and their families;
- Transparency and accountability through communicating program goals, services and outcomes to a variety of audiences through a range of methods; and
- A commitment to not only achieving full compliance with federal requirements, but also the highest possible quality through evidence-based practices and innovation.
- Exemplary programs start as early as possible in achieving positive outcomes for children and families by providing prenatal and birth-to-three services, either directly or through community partnerships.

### Health and Wellness recommendations

Although Head Start programs are required to ensure the provision of medical, dental and mental health assessments and services to enrolled children and their families, high quality programs integrate this component with research specifically by tracking health outcomes, program practices (e.g., interdisciplinary teams), cultural competence, accountability (sharing results), and engagement with parents (e.g., health advisory committees) and community collaboration.

High quality programs for young children help ensure they have a medical and dental home for receiving well-child care and treatment. Regular screening and assessment of children’s vision, hearing, nutrition and health help identify concerns early and link children to additional evaluation and services.

### Parent, Family and Community Engagement

High quality early childhood programs support parents in their relationships with their children and in meeting their children’s needs. To ensure that parents are able to promote their young child’s learning and continue their success throughout school, programs must:

- 1) Promote and enhance the parent/child relationship
- 2) Provide parents with information about their child’s growth and development, and

3) Encourage parents' involvement and advocacy in their child's education and school (Educare, 2009).

### Cultural Context and Competency

Therefore, to maximize student achievement, motivation and potential, instructors must display appropriate cultural competencies and embed such competencies into course curriculum and communication. Teachers, staff and administration should demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions that reflect cultural competencies (Tabors and Snow, 1994). These are necessary to support family communication and establish reciprocal relationships between teachers and parents. The demonstration of cultural competencies of administrations, staff and teachers impact the school climate and promote a welcoming, nurturing environment that fosters school and family communication, necessary for the academic and social potential of the child (NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, 2005a).

# SUMMARY OF PRIVATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR ECD IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES

The summary below provides a snapshot of the primary funders of ECD and related efforts in Indian Country within mainstream and tribal philanthropy as well as federal funding agencies. Echo Hawk Consulting encourages BWF to make connections with other funders – private philanthropy and government agencies – to learn more about effective grantmaking in the field of ECD and to offer their own experiences and expertise. If BWF hosts a funders’ roundtable in the future, these funders might provide a starting point to identify an invitation list.

## Private Philanthropy

Echo Hawk Consulting has several contacts at foundations that are working in the field of ECD and/or Native American communities and with whom BWF may want to build relationships as they move forward. Contact information for these grantmakers may be found in this report’s appendix.

### NoVo Foundation

Jennifer and Peter Buffet are the Co-Presidents of the foundation. They also co-chair the Board of Directors. Peter Buffett is the youngest son of investor Warren Buffett. In the summer of 2016, the NoVo Foundation launched a new “Indigenous Communities Initiative.” According to NoVo:

*“Throughout North America, a robust group of Indigenous organizations have emerged to dismantle centuries-old systems of oppression, colonization, and historical trauma. By lifting up community strengths and drawing on new models of leadership and organizing, this 21st Century intergenerational movement is pointing the way toward transformative change that is deeply rooted in Indigenous thinking and ways of life.”*

The NoVo Foundation’s Indigenous Communities initiative seeks to help restore and strengthen indigenous knowledge and life-ways as potentially transformative in addressing some of the world’s—and similarly, some of Indigenous communities’—most pressing problems. Its strategic approach involves investing in projects that relate to the following priorities:

- Violence Against Girls, Women, and the Earth
- Leadership of Indigenous Girls and Women
- Indigenous Cultural Expression
- Healing from Historical Trauma and Oppression
- Indigenous Education

NoVo’s priorities, particularly their commitment to support Indigenous Education, makes them a top candidate for the Better Way Foundation to meet with and begin a dialogue about their work and possible opportunities for collaboration.



## **Lannan Foundation**

In 1960 J. Patrick Lannan, Sr., entrepreneur and financier, established Lannan Foundation. In 1994 Lannan initiated the Indigenous Communities Program to address the urgent needs of rural Native American communities. Funding priority is given to projects that are consistent with traditional values, in the areas of education, Native cultures, the revival and preservation of languages, legal rights, and environmental protection.

The Indigenous Communities Program funds projects within the following priority areas:

- Traditional Culture & Education
- Language Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Legal Rights
- Special Projects

The foundation has supported the efforts of several national organizations, though funding priority is currently given to smaller, rural grassroots organizations serving communities that are indigenous to specific geographic locations. Organizations supported both serve and are controlled by Native people. At this time the foundation only accepts new grant requests from United States federally recognized tribes or Native controlled 501(c)(3) organizations whose work is solely focused in the United States.

The Foundation is based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Should BWF conduct a site visit in October to New Mexico, it may be advisable to reach out in advance of the visit to learn more about any ECD investments that they may be making at present time or recently.

## **Dietel Partners**

Founded in 2007, Dietel Partners provides individuals and families with philanthropic strategy, counsel and grants management services. Together with its clients, Dietel Partners provides financial and other resources to enhance human rights, improve the lives of women and children, preserve cultural diversity and ensure the environmental health of the planet. It has offices in Maine, Virginia, and Seattle, Washington.

Since 2012, Dietel has represented an anonymous donor with interests in funding projects in Native communities that relate to improving the education, health and well-being of Native children and families. The majority of their funding has gone to support these type of projects particularly in South Dakota, Montana and North Dakota. They have done limited funding in national Native organizations and/or Native projects in other states.

It is highly recommended to that Echo Hawk Consulting help bridge some preliminary outreach particularly as BWF's work evolves in South Dakota and Pine Ridge to possibly set up an introductory meeting and to explore opportunities for collaboration.

### **Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community-Seeds of Native Health Campaign**

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) has committed \$5 million to improve the nutrition of Native Americans through its Seeds of Native Health campaign. The SMSC is a federally recognized, sovereign Indian tribe located southwest of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The SMSC has a deep tradition of helping other tribes and Native American people. This campaign represents a new extension of the SMSC's long history of philanthropy, by committing a portion of its annual charitable giving to a dedicated purpose. Having donated more than \$325 million since opening its Gaming Enterprise in the 1990s, as well as loaning more than \$500 million to other tribes, the SMSC is the largest philanthropic benefactor for Indian Country nationally and one of the largest charitable givers in Minnesota.

To date, through intermediary and Native-led grantmakers, Shakopee has invested \$2.5 million that has benefitted 40 tribal communities.

BWF has been introduced to Shakopee's representatives and there is a great opportunity for collaboration moving forward as Shakopee's investments have targeted largely young children and ECD and youth programs. It is recommended that BWF continue to build this important local and national relationship with Shakopee in order to expand opportunities for collaboration and impact on the educational and health opportunities for Native children.

### **San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. Over time, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has made progress toward becoming a self-sufficient tribal government with an established economic and social outlook.

San Manuel's charitable giving program supports organizations that provide services in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Applications are also accepted from Tribal Governments and Tribal nonprofit organizations throughout the United States.

Its resources are directed within four areas of program focus to benefit these communities and improve quality of life for adults, children and families. Its giving priorities include Education, Health, Economic & Community Development and Special Projects.

#### **Program Focus:**

- **Education:** Includes projects that address educational disparities and boost educational opportunities for youth. Of particular interest are early childhood education, high school graduation, and college-going rates. We provide support pre-K through high school, as well as to after-school and college/university projects.
- **Health:** Includes giving that supports prevention and health information projects, and direct health services for those in need. Giving is focused to improve health outcomes and address issues of particular concern locally and within Native American communities.
- **Economic & Community Development:** Includes projects that meet the basic needs of

families, employment and housing programs, community safety/infrastructure development projects, and financial literacy programs.

- **Special Projects:** In addition to Education, Health and Economic Development, San Manuel also supports Special Project requests. These include the arts, cultural awareness, nonprofit capacity building, environment initiatives, and disaster response projects – particularly those that address local issues and those focused within Native American communities.

It is recommended that as BWF's ECD grantmaking strategy evolves that it share information with San Manuel and to explore possibilities for an introductory meeting to share more about BWF's work and any possible shared interests in ECD.

### **Potlatch Fund**

The Potlatch Fund is a Native-led intermediary grantmaker whose mission it is “to inspire and build upon the Native tradition of giving and to expand philanthropy within Tribal Nations and Native Communities in the Northwest.” Their geographic focus area is Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. It re-grant funds to grassroots Native organizations and communities from large donors such as the Gates Foundation, NoVo Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, Dietel Partners, Marguerite Cargill Foundation and others. Their current grantmaking programs Native Student Success, Language Preservation and Education, and Healthy Pathways for Native Youth all align with ECD priorities in Indian Country.

It is recommended that as BWF moves towards finalizing its grantmaking strategy that an introductory meeting be set up with the Potlatch Fund to learn more about their work and awareness of promising ECD programs in their funding areas. They could be a promising Native grantmaking and convening partner for BWF in Northwest.

### **Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3F)**

NB3F is a Native-led nonprofit organization and intermediary grantmaker with a mission focused on reducing childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes. Its flagship program, Native Strong: Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures, is a national program of grantmaking, technical assistance, research, communications and advocacy.

In June 2016, NB3 was awarded a three-year \$2.4 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support Native childhood obesity prevention in the Southwest. Specifically, this grant will support Native communities in their efforts to eliminate the consumption of sugary sweetened beverages among Native children 0-8 and increase the consumption of safe drinking water.

Over 30 months, this initiative will bring together Native leaders, community members, youth and stakeholders in Native early childhood health to help guide, implement, and evaluate project outcomes and learning's. Selected groups will receive grants, technical assistance and training, and will participate in a peer learning cohort. The cohort will build a learning/action network designed to support successful approaches that will have potential for adaptation in

other communities.

If BWF conducts a site visit to New Mexico, it may be worthwhile to schedule a meeting with NB3F to learn more about their initiative and how the issues of health and nutrition factor into BWF's interests and goals for its ECD grantmaking strategy. NB3F may also shed light on some promising ECD programs that intersect with their work.

### **Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF)**

AECF is a foundation based in Baltimore and working across the country, to make grants that help federal agencies, states, counties, cities and neighborhoods create more innovative, cost-effective responses to the issues that negatively affect children: poverty, unnecessary disconnection from family and communities with limited access to opportunity.

AECF has supported a number of organizations and tribes in efforts related to Indian Child Welfare and education. Most recently, AECF invited BWF to participate in an introductory call to learn about the Tribal REDI Project.

As mentioned previously, number of issues and concerns did come up from BWF and Echo Hawk Consulting during the course of the call about the Tribal REDI Project. However, it is highly recommended that BWF continue to explore building a relationship with Cynthia Weaver at AECF as she is interested in funding research and evaluation of ECD programs which could be very important as BWF seeks to help uplift evidence-based and promising programs through its new grantmaking initiative in Indian Country.

### **Forest County Potawatomi Foundation**

With the advent of Indian gaming, the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe was able to establish and build two casinos — the first in Forest County, followed by one in Milwaukee. The revenue generated by gaming has had not only a positive impact on the tribe, its members and the surrounding communities but also in 1999, the tribe created the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation. Its mission is to help fight poverty, promote economic opportunity, strengthen communities and provide an example of responsible citizenship by assisting charitable organizations.

To date, the Foundation has proudly contributed over \$30 million to charitable causes in both Forest County, in the Greater Milwaukee area as well as tribes and Native organizations across the country including the National Indian Education Association.

As the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation is a funder operating in the same region as BWF, as the Foundation's ECD strategy evolves it would be recommended to conduct outreach to Forest County to share information about its work and explore any possible synergy around ECD programs.

### **HRK Foundation**

The HRK Foundation is an umbrella organization incorporating a number of family trusts and

funds. The most visible of these funds is the MAHADH Fund. In addition to the MAHADH Fund, HRK includes the Art and Martha Kaemmer Fund, the Mary H. Rice Foundation, and several other family funds. The HRK Foundation is based in Saint Paul, MN.

The Board awards funding in the three areas of Arts, Health, and Community Building, as well as legacy funding in the area of Education. They have supported a number of Native grantees over the years and in 2015, it co-sponsored a major funders tour of South Dakota reservations in partnership with the Agua Fund.

The Executive Director Kathleen Fluegel is a major champion of Indian Country issues and would be a useful contact and ally as BWF looks to expand its grantmaking in Indian Country as she is relatively well versed in projects happening particularly in South Dakota as well as with other funders who may be interested in supporting Native projects that relate to health, food sovereignty, culture and education. It is recommended that as BWF evolves its grantmaking strategy that it may be worthwhile to conduct outreach to set up an introductory meeting to share more about its strategy and to learn more about HRK and how it may be a useful collaborator and ally.

#### **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation, Inc.**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, the state's largest health plan. Prevention Minnesota is Blue Cross' initiative to tackle the leading root causes of preventable disease: tobacco use, lack of physical activity and unhealthy eating throughout Minnesota. Part of Blue Cross' nonprofit mission is to advocate for public policies that ensure access to affordable, high-quality health care for members. As the philanthropic arm of Blue Cross, the Foundation has a unique opportunity to focus "upstream" on social determinants of health to improve the health of entire communities throughout the state of Minnesota with a special focus on low-income communities. Blue Cross has a strong track record of funding Native communities and projects in Minnesota as well as being a champion for Native issues.

There are three Blue Cross funding priorities that may have possible alignment with BWF's interests and goals for ECD grantmaking strategy in Indian Country:

- **Stable Lives:** Children and families are engaged and supported so that they can achieve stable and thriving lives. This will be measured by an increase in the percentage of children who are ready for kindergarten, an increase in the supply of and access to high-quality early care and learning, and increased community capacity to support vulnerable people.
- **Social Connections:** Community members have increased connectedness, confidence, self-efficacy and opportunity to bring about change. Success will be measured by an increase in communities' capacity to foster social connections and by improved linkages to resources, opportunities and power to affect decisions that have an impact on people's lives and their communities.
- **Vibrant Communities:** Health considerations are at the forefront of community

decisions; equity assessments are routine practice; and core community institutions define their role as advancing health equity. Success will be measured by an increase in community awareness of equity and strategies to advance it, an increased role of and action by community institutions around equity and by institutionalizing best practices.

It is recommended that an introductory meeting be organized with the Blue Cross Blue Shield staff to learn more about their work and funding in Minnesota Native communities. It will also be important to share BWF's plans for its new Indian Country ECD grantmaking program and discuss where there is possible alignment and opportunities for collaboration.

### **Northwest Area Foundation**

The Northwest Area Foundation funds “champions of change” who reflect the distinct cultural strengths of their region which includes Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and the 75 Native Nations within those states.

The Northwest Area Foundation is the only foundation in the country to commit 40% of its annual grantmaking to Native-led organizations working to advance economic, social and cultural prosperity in the urban, suburban and reservation communities that anchor the region.

Of particular interest to the Better Way Foundation may be the foundation's “Indian Country Insights and Resources,” detailed best practices, guidelines and context for leaders seeking to support Native-led organizations. The foundation's partnerships with Native leaders across this region have yielded key insights about grantmaking for impact in Indian Country.<sup>78</sup>

It is recommended that outreach be conducted later this fall as BWF's strategy evolves to meet with Northwest Area Foundation to learn more about their poverty reduction and economic development work. This relationship building may be potential fertile ground for the discussion around supporting systems change and collaborative strategies in tribal communities where both Northwest Area and BWF are and/or may be working in.

### **Otto Bremer Foundation**

The Otto Bremer Foundation funds organizations and projects that are located in communities that are home to Bremer banks. The Foundation strives to make measurable and meaningful impact for positive change in communities throughout Minnesota, North Dakota and western Wisconsin. They fund variety of requests while giving highest priority to opportunities with the potential to move a community forward in meaningful, powerful and broad-based ways. They have a history of funding ECD initiatives as well as supporting limited funding for Native American projects.

One of the senior program officers at the Otto Bremer Foundation is Native American. It may be helpful as the BWF strategy evolves, to conduct outreach to share more information about

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<sup>78</sup> Further information may be found at: <http://www.nwaf.org/indian-country-insights-resources/>

BWF's new initiative and to explore if a meeting with Otto Bremer would be helpful to BWF's interests and goals.

### **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)**

RWJF is the largest health foundation in the country. They have recently restructured their strategies to focus on creating a culture of health. As part of this, early childhood development and the healthy weight of children 0-8 has become a priority focus for the foundation.

Key priorities for RWJF funding in this area are:

- Helping kids grow up at a healthy weight;
- Teaching kids social and emotional skills at home, in child-care settings and in the classroom;
- Creating schools where education and health are linked; and
- Empowering families, educators, providers, and other caring adults to create safe and healthy environments where kids can grow, learn, and succeed.

Specific initiatives include:

**Childhood Obesity:** Bringing about changes in public policy, community environments, and industry practices that help children achieve a healthy weight.

**Early Childhood Development:** Working with schools, families and communities to provide children the best foundation for a healthy life.

**Family and Social Support:** Establishing and expanding upon systems which help foster well-being in family and community settings.

**Mental and Emotional Well-Being:** Addressing related cognitive, social and emotional factors which affect health and well-being throughout life.

A more recent development is a partnership RWJF is creating with Ashoka to support innovative approaches to ECD. The Children's Wellbeing Initiative, a joint project of RWJF and Ashoka, starts with the understanding that physical fitness and safety is not enough. A culture of health demands attention to emotional wellbeing: a sense of self, belonging and purpose—for all children. The partnership will engage ECD practitioners, researchers, thought leaders and social entrepreneurs to identify best practices, promising interventions and to think outside of the box on improving children's health and well-being.

It is recommended as BWF's ECD strategy evolves to conduct outreach to RWJF to share more information and to learn more about their work in ECD and children's health. RWJF has a history of funding in Indian Country and is typically very open to collaboration with other funders. Their president, senior staff and program officers working in the Healthy Kids, Healthy Weight Program and Health Equity have proven to be champions of issues in Indian Country.

### **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) places the optimal development of children and healing the profound racial gaps and inequities that exist as a central part of their mission. WKKF concentrates its resources on early childhood (prenatal to age 8), within the context of families and communities, offers the best opportunity to dramatically reduce the vulnerability caused by poverty and racial inequity over time.

Priority areas:

- **Educated Kids:** Increase the number of children who are reading-and-math proficient by third grade.
- **Healthy Kids:** Increase the number of children born at a healthy birth weight and who receive the care and healthy food they need for optimal development.
- **Secure Families:** Increase the number of children and families living at least 200 percent above the poverty level.

As outlined in this report, Echo Hawk Consulting interviewed Alvin Warren, program officer for the WKKF New Mexico team. WKKF is making a number of investments in promising and innovative ECD programs across the state of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation. It is recommended that if BWF conducts a site visit to New Mexico that outreach be conducted to schedule a meeting with Alvin Warren and the WKKF New Mexico team to learn more about their work and opportunities for impact in ECD programs in Native communities within the state and Navajo Nation. There may be highly useful opportunities for information sharing and collaboration.

Appendix #2 in this report lists several foundations funding nationally and in the areas of “child development” or “early childhood education.” During the next phase of Echo Hawk Consulting’s contract with the Better Way Foundation, we will explore the potential for productive partnerships with these entities.

### Federal Funders

A few federal agencies have funding programs that may encompass ECD. They include:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families/Early Head Start/Child Care Partnerships. The link for more information is:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/early-learning/ehs-cc-partnerships>

These grants will allow new or existing Early Head Start programs to partner with local child care centers and family child care providers serving infants and toddlers from low-income families.

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families/Administration for Native Americans/ Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS). The link for more information is:



<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/ana/programs/seds/about>

Among SEDS' areas of interest in the field of "Social Development" is:

- *Early Childhood Development* - Supporting stable and high-quality, culturally appropriate childhood education programs; creating early childhood education jobs; and improving community-wide planning and coordination of early childhood programs.

Some grantees, such as Thunder Valley CDC/Lakota Immersion Day Care, have current or past SEDS grants.

- U.S. Department of the Interior/Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). BIE's mission is to provide quality education opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a tribe's needs for cultural and economic well-being, in keeping with the wide diversity of Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages as distinct cultural and governmental entities. The link for more information is:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/ServiceOverview/IndianEducation/>

In School Year 2007-2008, the 183 Bureau-funded elementary and secondary schools, located on 64 reservations in 23 states, served approximately 42,000 Indian students. Of these, 58 are BIE-operated and 125 are tribally operated under BIE contracts or grants. The Bureau also funds or operates off-reservation boarding schools and peripheral dormitories near reservations for students attending public schools. BIE-funded schools may be valuable partners in developing ECD programs.

- U.S. Department of Education. Competitively-awarded discretionary grants may include those targeting early learning programs. The links for more information are:

<http://www.ed.gov/>

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/index.html>

Grantees of any of these funders – private or federal – may be prospective grantees for BWF or may provide leads for developing ECD programs.

## CONCLUSION

Echo Hawk Consulting has presented a comprehensive scan of the context, issues and challenges facing ECD programs, rural and urban Native communities, children and families in this report. Our goal with this report was to present a thorough overview of the landscape of ECD in Indian Country that can be used as a comprehensive resource guide for BWF as well as provide insights into the development of its new 5-year ECD grantmaking strategy in Indian Country.

As mentioned throughout this report, the myriad of complex, deep-rooted issues and challenges facing ECD programs, schools, children, families, tribes and urban communities requires a thoughtful and intentional approach that engages Native programs and communities as partners first and foremost. Moreover, it requires that BWF have reasonable expectations about the timeline for progress and outcomes and an understanding that the types of best practices and evidence-based models found in non-Native communities do not necessarily exist yet in Indian Country. However, that is not to say that there are not promising models. On the contrary, Indian Country is ripe with opportunities to support and invest in impact and innovation.

Throughout the course of this report, Echo Hawk Consulting identified a number of highly promising and innovative models in Native communities that with strategic investment and partnership based on mutual respect, learning and reciprocity, could begin to flourish and expand their reach and impact as well as provide important learning for other Native communities, BWF's work and the ECD field at large. Echo Hawk Consulting encourages BWF to go where other funders have not always necessarily gone, and to be bold but measured in their work and investments in Indian Country to support Native-led and community-driven solutions to improving ECD opportunities and the overall health and well being of Native children.

A summary of Echo Hawk Consulting's recommendations were outlined in the opening of this report. The following represents a summary of those recommendations in addition to next steps for BWF and for its engagement with Echo Hawk Consulting.

### Overall Recommendations

#### **Emerging Best Practices Identified Through Echo Hawk Consulting's Research:**

##### **1. Parent involvement**

Schools that infuse Native culture into the school climate via the curricula, staff expertise, and school activities see a corresponding increase in the participation and interest level of Native families. This lends itself to more interest in the child's education.

## **2. Hire American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) staff**

Many Native students feel isolated and invisible. They would benefit from the presence of Native educators who can serve as advocates and role models for students and as liaisons for Native families who feel uncomfortable navigating the school system.

## **3. Model respect for AI/AN cultures and languages.**

Incorporate Native culture and contributions into classroom projects, the school curriculum, and after-school activities.

## **4. Qualified and accredited teaching staff**

Highly knowledgeable, stable leadership is key to a program's success. Program leaders had strong backgrounds in early childhood development and a strong primary professional commitment to the successful implementation and rigorous evaluation of the program.

## **5. Sufficient Dosage.**

The amount of the programs was well matched to the program goals and needs of the participants. Dosage refers to the hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and number of years.

## **6. Overall health and well-being of each child**

High quality programs for young children help ensure they have a medical and dental home for receiving well-child care and treatment. Regular screening and assessment of children's vision, hearing, nutrition and health help identify concerns early and link children to additional evaluation and services.

### **Considerations for BWF's ECD Grantmaking Strategy in Indian Country**

1. A limited number of current BWF-funded schools may prove to be the initial intervention points for BWF ECD funding or may be springboards to developing other relationships for ECD funding. The schools that are most prime for further engagement around ECD at this time are St. Michaels and Red Cloud Indian School.
2. The primary provider of ECD programs and services in most Native communities is the federally-funded Head Start Program. It is recommended that BWF explore ways to support and enhance these existing providers based on their willingness to partner and explore collaboration with other entities within their communities related to systems-based approaches to address larger issues impacting child well being and ECD access.
3. The most critical gaps related to ECD in these communities are those directly related to ECD programs and schools-basic infrastructure, facilities and teacher/staff recruitment/retention/professional development – and relate to Native communities' context – children's mental health, parental and community engagement, and parental supports. Addressing these challenges should weigh significantly into the priorities for funding for BWF's grantmaking strategy in the future. This may mean providing flexibility of funding to promising grantees to address their most pressing needs.

4. Some of the greatest areas of opportunity to address these gaps or build upon current efforts are the Native-driven and culturally-based models already in existence that have already proven successful in terms of serving children and their community.
5. Echo Hawk Consulting encourages BWF to be measured and strategic based on the size of its portfolio about where it can achieve the greatest impact. We believe these opportunities include BWF's role as an investor in cutting-edge models, its ability to evaluate and learn with its grantees and to share that learning with others, and its ability to convene and influence other philanthropic funders to begin to holistically address community needs supportive of ECD.
6. It is recommended that BWF be open to funding a mix of Native-led, community-based ECD programs, some of which are Head Start-related and others privately run, some in the communities of BWF-funded schools, and others elsewhere. Each one represents an opportunity for learning or investment or both. A diversity within BWF's grantmaking portfolio is strongly encouraged in order to foster the greatest breadth of learning and impact.
7. BWF should be prepared that some of its future investments will face challenges and Echo Hawk Consulting encourages the Foundation to be open and creative to working with its grantees to help empower their success while also protecting its investments.
8. The key linkages, partnerships, relationships, or contextual factors the Foundation be mindful of as it explores the potential of supporting ECD in these Native communities include:
  - 1) Nascent or existing Native community- and culturally-based ECD programs will provide inspiring models for investment and/or learning.
  - 2) Other philanthropic funders and government funding sources will need to be involved to help address the holistic context of Native communities in support of ECD efforts and BWF should engage in conversations regarding systems change approaches.
  - 2) The complex nature of Native communities and the overall lack of other significant investment mean that one cannot address one issue in a vacuum without also needing to bring along other elements in tandem.
  - 4) Each Native community is different, from its traditions, culture, language, circumstances and needs.
  - 5) The practice and preservation of Native languages and cultures is paramount to the successful development of Native children as productive and contributing youth, adults and community members.

#### Recommendations for framing BWF's work:

The following are offered as best practices for guiding BWF's engagement, work, relationship and partnership building in Indian Country:

- Build trust with the grantees to be able to share an honest exchange of what is working and not, to identify capacity building needs, and to help them to secure need capacity building resources;
- Work with grantees to define evaluation metrics that reflect their measures of progress and success alongside standardized measures important to the Better Way Foundation.

- Ensure community control and engagement by investing in community-led and –based institutions;
- Prioritize models that have productive institutional, community and family partnerships that will address children’s holistic needs in early childhood;
- Understand there are no real “best practices” in Indian Country that have been fully documented. Be willing to invest in emerging and promising models as well as invest in the capacity for grantees to document and evaluate their work to promote learning that is beneficial for the grantee, BWF and the ECD field at large.
- Develop internal systems to document and learn from BWF-funded models to capture challenges/barriers, progress, key partnerships, lessons learned and best practices in order to inform future Better Way Foundation funding.
- Perhaps most important, in the words of one of our interviewees, “Make long-term commitments to grantees and be partners and not just a funder.”

### Areas for potential BWF investment

As presented in this report, Native communities require a holistic approach. Successful support for ECD for Native children will mean strategic investments to support ECD programs and educators, but also into parental and community engagement, parental supports and services, mental health support for young children, infrastructure and facilities needs, and essential inclusion and emphasis on Native languages and cultures to ground the children with a positive sense of identity.

#### We encourage BWF to consider funding:

- **COLLABORATION, NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS:** Community-driven partnerships of diverse stakeholders will play a critical role in ensuring the success of community-based ECD programs and in ensuring that children and their parents have the support necessary for the children’s success. Specifically, BWF could:
  - Invest in supporting community and inter-agency collaboration to leverage all needed community resources to support ECD programs and address the range of socio-economic needs and challenges that children and families face.
  - Consider funding more than one grantee in a community, as appropriate to the local ECD needs and programs/opportunities.
- **TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION:** Provide resources for grantees to invest in recruiting and retaining quality staff, capacity building for more competitive salaries and ensuring professional development opportunities.
- **NATIVE LANGUAGE & CULTURE:** Ensure that Native cultures and languages are a strong focus of funded programs that includes curriculum development, teacher training, parent and community engagement.
- **PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING:** Support planning grants and feasibility studies for ECD development, and support capacity building as needed for grantees.
- **MENTAL HEALTH:** Invest in supporting mental health needs of children in addition to academic, social and emotional development.

- **FACILITIES:** Consider investing in resources to support facility improvements, leasing or building new facilities.

**Besides project-support grants, we encourage BWF to consider the following strategies:**

- **GENERAL OPERATING** to invest in critical resources and pressing needs prioritized by the grantee to ensure their promising program work continues.
- **SYSTEMS APPROACHES** to invest in bringing together diverse stakeholders within the communities served, regionally and nationally to create a space for collaboration, sharing and leveraging resources and thinking outside of the box in how best to advance not only promising ECD programming but to address the serious barriers and challenges to the well-being of Native children and families.
- **PLACE-BASED WORK:** Pine Ridge Indian Reservation would be ripe to test a focused, place-based approach with at least three grantees in the current pipeline (Red Cloud Indian School, Lakota Immersion Day Care/Thunder Valley and Oglala Lakota College Head Start Program). The upcoming convening in September at Pine Ridge could help to define what a focused place-based initiative could look like at Pine Ridge. New Mexico could also become another possible candidate for a place-based strategy as well depending on the outcome of the planned BWF site visit in October.
- **PILOTING COMPETITIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS** to attract promising models not yet identified in Echo Hawk Consulting's research as Indian Country is vast. A competitive, demonstration grant opportunity could invite potential applicants to propose new projects to address major barriers such as teacher recruitment and retention in the effort to foster new ideas and innovation.
- **MULTI-YEAR GRANTS** to truly support changes that have a chance to be sustainable and to encourage their institutionalization within the community.

### Recommendations for next steps

In the next phase of Echo Hawk Consulting's work with BWF, we will move forward to build relationships with key community-based players and funder, to deepen understanding of community and ECD issues in specific Native communities, as well as to identify targeted communities.

**By February 28, 2017, we will:**

1. Assist with the coordination and facilitation of ECD stakeholder convenings in up to two Native communities to explore opportunities and challenges around local ECD program delivery and assist BWF in gathering a better understanding of how best to support ECD program efforts.
2. In concert with BWF staff, undertake relationship building and partnership development discussions/meetings/site visits in order to gauge the alignment and fit with BWF mission, vision, values, and grantmaking strategy.
3. Assist individual partners as needed in the creation of individual project concept notes and/or proposals for submission to BWF.

4. Assist with relationship building with other funders and external ECD stakeholders.
5. Assist BWF staff in the development and submission of any recommendations, updates and reports to the BWF Board of Directors.
6. Provide support and technical assistance as needed to BWF staff with regard to cultural competency and engagement with Indian Country grantees, stakeholders and issues.
7. Provide regular reports (written and phone/Skype) to BWF staff highlighting and reporting key findings, gaps, lessons learned, opportunities, and developments.

**Furthermore, we recommend BWF:**

- Continue education of its Board and staff in Native American issues, Native community development and the field of ECD for Native children;
- Attend the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families' annual National Research Conference on Early Childhood<sup>79</sup> to be held in summer 2017 to further its understanding of ECD issues in general and to meet with major ECD funders and practitioners;
- Continue to make site visits to Native communities to meet with representatives of potential or actual grantee organizations to learn more about their context and specific issues affecting their work;
- As appropriate and invited by community representatives, convene stakeholders in communities that may be or are funded by BWF to encourage collaboration and dialogue;
- Build a systems approach with other funders to begin to address Native communities/ECD programs' holistic needs by:
  - Building one-on-one relationships with peer funders in the fields of ECD and Native American community development which may lead to leveraged, complementary funding;
  - As appropriate for a BWF-funded grantee, conduct proactive outreach to other funders to recommend funding to meet a specific need complementary to ECD programming; and
  - Hosting one or more convenings (either state-, regionally- or nationally-focused) of other philanthropic (and/or government) funders to catalyze other supportive interventions.

### In gratitude

Echo Hawk Consulting wishes to thank the Board and staff of the Better Way Foundation for the opportunity to conduct this research and to partner with the Foundation to explore the opportunities to learn and invest in impact and innovation in ECD in Indian Country. Native American children and communities are often invisible and greatly misunderstood in

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<sup>79</sup> For the website on the summer 2016 conference, please see:  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/events/the-national-research-conference-on-early-childhood-2016>

mainstream philanthropy and society. The Board and staff of Better Way have demonstrated incredible respect, thoughtfulness, intentionality and an openness that is not always readily seen among their peers in philanthropy. Echo Hawk Consulting truly believes that as the Better Way Foundation moves forward with its ECD Grantmaking Strategy in Indian Country that it can provide a model and learning that can greatly inform the ECD field and philanthropy.

It has been an honor to serve and be a part of this endeavor and we look forward to our continued work with the Better Way Foundation to help empower Native children to achieve their full potential, health, happiness and overall well being.

Iriwe Ta'Tura Tskisu ( With great respect),

Echo Hawk Consulting



# APPENDIX

## Appendix #1

### Contacts at foundations that are working in the field of ECD and/or Native American communities:

Grantmaker Name	Contact Information	Contact Referral from Echo Hawk Consulting
Johnson Foundation, Robert Wood, The	College Rd. E. and Rte. 1, P.O. Box 2316 Princeton, NJ 08543-2316 (877) 843-7953 <a href="mailto:mail@rwjf.org">mail@rwjf.org</a> <a href="http://www.rwjf.org">www.rwjf.org</a>	Jasmine Hall Ratliff, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, <a href="mailto:jratliff@rwjf.org">jratliff@rwjf.org</a> Dwayne Proctor, Senior Program Officer and Advisor to President, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, <a href="mailto:dproctor@rwjf.org">dproctor@rwjf.org</a> Mike Painter, Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, <a href="mailto:mpainter@rwjf.org">mpainter@rwjf.org</a>
Kellogg Foundation, W. K.	1 Michigan Ave. E. Battle Creek, MI 49017-4005 (269) 968-1611 <a href="http://www.wkkf.org">www.wkkf.org</a>	Alvin H. Warren, Program Officer, Kellogg Foundation, New Mexico Team, <a href="mailto:alvin.warren@wkkf.org">alvin.warren@wkkf.org</a> Jessica Coloma, Program Officer, Kellogg Foundation, New Mexico Team, <a href="mailto:jessica.coloma@wkkf.org">jessica.coloma@wkkf.org</a> Robby E. Rodriguez, Program Officer, Kellogg Foundation, New Mexico Team, <a href="mailto:robby.rodriguez@wkkf.org">robby.rodriguez@wkkf.org</a> Nadia Brigham, Program Officer, Racial Equity Program, Kellogg Foundation, <a href="mailto:nadia.brigham@wkkf.org">nadia.brigham@wkkf.org</a>
NoVo Foundation	535 Fifth Ave., 33rd. Fl. New York City, NY 10017-0051 Kelly Merryman, Dir., Finance and Opers. <a href="http://www.novofoundation.org">www.novofoundation.org</a>	Hester Dillon, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:hdillon@novofoundation.org">hdillon@novofoundation.org</a>

Lannan Foundation	313 Read St. Santa Fe, NM 87501-2628 (505) 986-8160 Ruth Simms, Cont. <a href="mailto:info@lannan.org">info@lannan.org</a> <a href="http://www.lannan.org">www.lannan.org</a>	Laurie Betlach, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:laurieb@lannan.org">laurieb@lannan.org</a>
Dietel Partners	<a href="http://www.dietelpartners.com">www.dietelpartners.com</a> P O Box 309 Flint Hill, Virginia 22627	Ren Dietel, Senior Partner, , <a href="mailto:rdietel@dietelpartners.com">rdietel@dietelpartners.com</a>
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians	26569 Community Center Drive Highland, CA 92346 (909) 864-8933	Mindy Silva, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:msilva@SanManuel-NSN.Gov">msilva@SanManuel-NSN.Gov</a>  Faun White, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:fwhite@sanmanuel-nsn.gov">fwhite@sanmanuel-nsn.gov</a>
Potlatch Fund	801 2nd Ave., Ste. 304 Seattle, WA 98104-1512 (206) 624-6076 <a href="mailto:info@potlatchfund.org">info@potlatchfund.org</a> <a href="http://www.potlatchfund.org">www.potlatchfund.org</a>	Dana Arviso, Executive Director, <a href="mailto:dana@potlatchfund.org">dana@potlatchfund.org</a>
Notah Begay III Foundation	290 Prairie Star Rd. Santa Ana Pueblo, NM 87004-5939 <a href="http://www.nb3foundation.org">www.nb3foundation.org</a> (505) 867-0775	Justin Huenemann, Executive Director, <a href="mailto:justin@nb3f.org">justin@nb3f.org</a>
Annie E. Casey Foundation	701 St. Paul St. Baltimore, MD 21202-2311 (410) 547-6600 Satonya C. Fair, Dir., Grants Mgmt. <a href="mailto:webmail@aecf.org">webmail@aecf.org</a> <a href="http://www.aecf.org">www.aecf.org</a>	Cynthia Weaver, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:CWeaver@AECF.ORG">CWeaver@AECF.ORG</a>
Forest County Potawatomi Foundation	3209 W Highland Blvd, Suite 100 Milwaukee Wisconsin 53208 <a href="https://www.fcpotawatomi.com/government/foundation/">https://www.fcpotawatomi.com/government/foundation/</a>	Kaye Garcia, Executive Director, <a href="mailto:Kaye.garcia@fcpotawatomi-nsn.gov">Kaye.garcia@fcpotawatomi-nsn.gov</a>
HRK Foundation	345 Saint Peter St., Ste. 1200 Saint Paul, MN 55102-1216 Kathleen Fluegel, Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:Info@HRKFoundation.org">Info@HRKFoundation.org</a> <a href="http://www.hrkfoundation.org">www.hrkfoundation.org</a>	Kathleen Fluegel, Executive Director, <a href="mailto:kathleenfluegel@hrkgroup.com">kathleenfluegel@hrkgroup.com</a>

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation, Inc.	1750 Yankee Doodle Rd., N159 Eagan, MN 55121-1613 (651) 662-3950 Carolyn Link, Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:foundation@bluecrossmn.com">foundation@bluecrossmn.com</a> <a href="http://www.bcbsmnfoundation.org">www.bcbsmnfoundation.org</a>	Alison Babb, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:alison.babb@bluecrossmn.com">alison.babb@bluecrossmn.com</a>
Northwest Area Foundation	60 Plato Blvd. E., Ste. 400 Saint Paul, MN 55107-1832 (651) 224-9635 <a href="mailto:info@nwaf.org">info@nwaf.org</a> <a href="http://www.nwaf.org">www.nwaf.org</a>	Karla Miller, VP Programs, <a href="mailto:kmiller@NWAF.org">kmiller@NWAF.org</a> John Fetzer, Program Officer, <a href="mailto:jfetzer@NWAF.org">jfetzer@NWAF.org</a>
Otto Bremer Foundation	30 E. 7th St. , Ste. 2900 Saint Paul, MN 55101-2988 (651) 227-8036 Danielle Cheslog, Grants Mgr.; Kari Suzuki, Dir., Opers. <a href="mailto:obf@ottobremer.org">obf@ottobremer.org</a> <a href="http://www.ottobremer.org">www.ottobremer.org</a>	Tony Looking Elk, Program Officer <a href="mailto:TonyLE@ottobremer.org">TonyLE@ottobremer.org</a>

## Appendix #2

Below is a list (from the Foundation Directory online) of private foundations that fund nationally and fund in the areas of “child development” or “early childhood education.” We have not included those whose total giving is listed as “n/a.” They are sorted in descending order of total giving. Of these funders, the only one that also significantly funds in Native American communities is the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. We have noted those with whom Echo Hawk Consulting has contacts.

Grantmaker Name	Contact Information	Total Assets	Total Giving	Contact Referral from Echo Hawk Consulting
<u>Packard Foundation, David and Lucile, The</u>	343 Second St. Los Altos, CA United States 94022-3632 (650) 948-7658 Contact: Communications Dept. <a href="mailto:communications@packard.org">communications@packard.org</a> <a href="http://www.packard.org">www.packard.org</a>	\$7,084,903,284	\$291,696,462	
<u>Mott Foundation, Charles Stewart</u>	Mott Foundation Bldg., 503 S. Saginaw St., Ste. 1200 Flint, MI 48502-1851 (810) 238-5651 <a href="mailto:info@mott.org">info@mott.org</a> <a href="http://www.mott.org">www.mott.org</a>	\$2,798,215,005	\$72,899,255	
<u>Haas, Jr. Fund, Evelyn and Walter</u>	114 Sansome St., Ste. 600 San Francisco, CA 94104-3814 (415) 856-1400 Contact: Clayton Juan, Grantmaking and Accounting Assoc. <a href="mailto:siteinfo@haasjr.org">siteinfo@haasjr.org</a> <a href="http://www.haasjr.org">www.haasjr.org</a>	\$485,741,754	\$28,040,353	
<u>IBM International   Foundation</u>	New Orchard Rd. Armonk, NY 10504-1709 Judy Chin, Fdn. Mgr. <a href="http://www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility">www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility</a>	\$221,162,296	\$24,999,021	

Grantmaker Name	Contact Information	Total Assets	Total Giving	Contact Referral from Echo Hawk Consulting
<u>Ronald McDonald House Charities</u>	1 Kroc Dr. Oak Brook, IL 60523-2275 (630) 623-7048 Jennifer Smith, Dir., Comms. <a href="mailto:info@rmhc.org">info@rmhc.org</a> <a href="http://www.rmhc.org">www.rmhc.org</a>	\$131,500,478	\$22,440,142	
<u>Timken Foundation of Canton</u>	200 Market Ave. N., Ste. 210 Canton, OH 44702-1437 Ward J. Timken, Tr. 191 N. Wacker Dr., Ste. 1500 Chicago, IL 60606-1899 (312) 621-0566	\$377,843,984	\$15,520,760	
<u>Harris Foundation, Irving</u>	June Matayoshi, Grants Mgr. <a href="mailto:mleary@irvingharrisfdn.org">mleary@irvingharrisfdn.org</a> <a href="http://www.irvingharrisfdn.org/Irving_Harris_Foundation/index.html">http://www.irvingharrisfdn.org/</a> <a href="http://www.irvingharrisfdn.org/Irving_Harris_Foundation/index.html">Irving_Harris_Foundation/index.html</a>	\$272,971,624	\$13,621,991	
<u>Challenge Foundation, The</u>	5 Concourse Pkwy., Ste. 1000 Atlanta, GA 30328-5350 (404) 892-9651 William J. Steinbrook Jr., Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:information@challengefoundation.org">information@challengefoundation.org</a>	\$37,271,882	\$8,242,782	
<u>Foundation for Child Development</u>	295 Madison Ave., 40th Fl. New York City, NY 10017-6304 (212) 867-5777 Mark Bogosian, Comms. and Grants Off. <a href="mailto:info@fcd-us.org">info@fcd-us.org</a> <a href="http://www.fcd-us.org">www.fcd-us.org</a>	\$104,965,894	\$3,494,533	
<u>Jumpstart For Young Children, Inc.</u>	308 Congress St., 6th Fl. Boston, MA 02210-1015 (857) 413-4634 Naila Bolus, Pres. and C.E.O. <a href="http://www.jstart.org">www.jstart.org</a>	\$6,293,479	\$3,274,172	

Grantmaker Name	Contact Information	Total Assets	Total Giving	Contact Referral from Echo Hawk Consulting
<u>Belgian American Educational Foundation, Inc.</u>	195 Church St. New Haven, CT 06510-2009 (203) 785-4055 Emile L. Boulpaep MD, Chair. and Pres. <a href="mailto:emile.boulpaep@yale.edu">emile.boulpaep@yale.edu</a> <a href="http://www.baef.be">www.baef.be</a>	\$90,598,179	\$3,058,161	
<u>O'Shaughnessy Foundation, Inc., I. A.</u>	2001 Killebrew Dr., No. 120 Bloomington, MN 55425-1865 (952) 698-0959 <a href="mailto:iaoshaughnessyfdn@tds.net">iaoshaughnessyfdn@tds.net</a> <a href="http://www.iaoshaughnessyfdn.org">www.iaoshaughnessyfdn.org</a>	\$92,445,490	\$2,901,356	
<u>MDRC (formerly Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation)</u>	16 E. 34th St. New York City, NY 10016-4326 (212) 532-3200 <a href="mailto:information@mdrc.org">information@mdrc.org</a> <a href="http://www.mdrc.org">www.mdrc.org</a>	\$90,045,462	\$2,638,444	
<u>Technical Training Foundation</u>	1429 Osgood St. North Andover, MA 01845-1012 (978) 685-1553	\$72,669,283	\$2,529,413	
<u>Feinstein Foundation, Inc., The</u>	37 Alhambra Cir. Cranston, RI 02905-3416 Alan Shawn Feinstein, Pres. <a href="mailto:asf@feinsteinfoundation.org">asf@feinsteinfoundation.org</a> <a href="http://www.feinsteinfoundation.org">www.feinsteinfoundation.org</a>	\$39,026,659	\$2,061,570	
<u>Jenesis Group, The</u>	130 E. John Carpenter Fwy. Irving, TX 75062-2708 Kim Tanner <a href="mailto:ktanner@jenesis.org">ktanner@jenesis.org</a> <a href="http://www.jenesis.org">www.jenesis.org</a>	\$43,972,110	\$1,743,997	
<u>Guggenheim Foundation, Harry Frank The</u>	25 W 53rd St New York City, NY 10019-5401 (646) 428-0971 <a href="mailto:info@hfg.org">info@hfg.org</a> <a href="http://www.hfg.org">www.hfg.org</a>	\$61,897,813	\$1,497,866	

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<u>Share and Care Foundation</u>	676 Winters Ave. Paramus, NJ 07652-3912 (201) 262-7599 Arun Bhansali, Pres. <a href="mailto:info@shareandcare.org">info@shareandcare.org</a> <a href="http://www.shareandcare.org">www.shareandcare.org</a>	\$2,133,933	\$1,090,462	
<u>Shumaker Family Foundation</u>	1948 E. Santa Fe St., Ste. G Olathe, KS 66062-1894 (913) 764-1772 Judy Wright, Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:request@shumakerfamilyfoundation.net">request@shumakerfamilyfoundation.net</a> <a href="http://www.shumakerfamilyfoundation.org">www.shumakerfamilyfoundation.org</a>	\$18,667,707	\$777,400	
<u>Spunk Fund, Inc.</u>	780 3rd Ave., 24th Fl. New York City, NY 10017-2024 (212) 980-8880 <a href="mailto:mg@spunkfund.com">mg@spunkfund.com</a>	\$22,649,928	\$733,480	
<u>Mailman Family Foundation, Inc., A. L.</u>	707 Westchester Ave. White Plains, NY 10604-3102 <a href="mailto:info@mailman.org">info@mailman.org</a>	\$17,586,615	\$650,650	
<u>Ross Foundation, Dorothea Haus, The</u>	1036 Monroe Ave. Rochester, NY 14620-1725 (585) 473-6006 Wayne S. Cook, Fdn. Exec. <a href="mailto:rossfoundation@frontiernet.net">rossfoundation@frontiernet.net</a> <a href="http://www.dhrossfoundation.org">www.dhrossfoundation.org</a>	\$17,738,758	\$559,624	
<u>WHO (Women Helping Others) Inc.</u>	2121 Midway Rd. Carrollton, TX 75006-5039 (972) 341-3019 Cindy Turek, Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:who@beauticontrol.com">who@beauticontrol.com</a> <a href="http://whofoundation.org">whofoundation.org</a>	\$344,328	\$269,950	



<b>Grantmaker Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>Total Giving</b>	<b>Contact Referral from Echo Hawk Consulting</b>
<u>Society for Research in Child Development, Inc.</u>	2950 S. State St., Ste. 401 Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6773 (734) 926-0600 Lynn S. Liben, Pres. info@srcd.org www.srcd.org	\$12,481,546	\$172,265	
<u>Dewing Foundation, Frances R.</u>	P.O. Box 45259 Madison, WI 53744-5259 (401) 749-8550 www.frd-foundation.org	\$2,499,573	\$145,089	
<u>Cove Point Foundation, The</u>	60 E. 42nd St., No. 3210 New York City, NY 10165-0050 (212) 599-3388 William C. Morris, Treas. and Dir.	\$1,552,413	\$50,000	
<u>Magaldi Felin Companion Animal Charitable Trust</u>	30 St. Clair Ave., Ste. 1500 Toronto, Canada M4V3A2 (720) 264-5711 John Petch, Exec. Dir. info@mwmccain.ca	\$105,168	\$20,000	