

National Service in Indian Communities

Indian Tribes and organizations that support Native American communities have been successfully drawing upon national service resources to meet family and community needs for more than 40 years. The Corporation for National and Community Service—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, VISTA, NCCC, and Learn and Serve America programs—is committed to expanding programs that address issues of concern to Native communities needs in a culturally appropriate manner. In the 2007–2008 program year, the Corporation is investing approximately \$12.5 million to support nearly 150 Tribal-related projects in 33 states involving more than 37,000 national service participants. Those projects, which take place both on and off reservations, reach more than 130 federally recognized Tribes and Native American communities with services that benefit Native Americans and that provide opportunities for Native Americans to serve their communities. National service participants currently are serving Indian communities from the Hawaiian Islands to Maine and from Alaska to Florida.

PARTNERS. The Corporation works with Tribal Governments, other Federal agencies, colleges and universities, consortia, and national and local nonprofit groups.

ANNUAL FUNDING. By law, at least 1% of AmeriCorps funds and a minimum of 3% of Learn and Serve America funds—totaling nearly \$3 million annually—must be used solely to support Tribal communities. Tribes also may apply for additional funds through the Corporation's other programs, including Senior Corps and VISTA. The Corporation is working closely with our partners to increase support to Native American communities where national service has become a proven strategy to address local needs.

ISSUE AREAS: Across all its programs that serve Indian communities, the Corporation is supporting projects in the following areas:

- **Assisting Elders:** Repairing and weatherizing homes, assisting with daily chores, providing respite care, helping elders to remain independent in their own homes.
- **Preserving Tribal Culture:** Restoring cultural sites, organizing oral history projects, providing leadership development to Tribal Councils, and planting community gardens using traditional methods.
- **Educating and Mentoring Youth:** Tutoring children with low literacy skills, organizing substance-abuse and gang-prevention

activities, organizing community service activities for youth, and matching youth with Tribal elders for cultural and educational learning.

- **Health and Family Services:** Supporting victims of abuse, caring for special-needs infants and children, teaching parenting and family-management skills, providing immunizations and health information, and helping families access available social services.
- **Job Training and Economic Development:** Counseling new business owners, delivering workforce development curricula, and building social entrepreneurship skills.
- **Disaster Preparedness and Response:** Providing emergency response training, preparing disaster kits, and offering relief services to victims of natural disasters.

SUPPORT BY PROGRAM

- **Senior Corps:** 63 programs in 14 states, representing a total investment of approximately \$4.8 million and engaging more than 3,600 participants.
- **AmeriCorps VISTA:** 48 projects in 27 states, representing an investment of approximately \$4.2 million. In addition, the 250 VISTA members supported by these projects could collectively receive up to \$1.2 million in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards to help pay for college or to pay back student loans.

- **AmeriCorps State/National:** 9 projects in 12 states, representing a total investment of approximately \$2.2 million (\$1.7 million in Tribal set-aside funds and \$500,000 in other funds). In addition, 10 projects serve Indian communities. The 169 members supported by the Tribe-sponsored projects could collectively receive up to \$500,000 in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards to help pay for college or pay back student loans.
- **Learn and Serve America:** 11 projects in 10 states, representing a total investment of \$1.24 million and engaging 33,000 Native Americans in service to their communities. (Learn and Serve America uses service-learning as a way to address community needs while simultaneously developing students' academic and civic skills.)

SAMPLE PROJECTS

Navajo Nation Foster Grandparent Program (Senior Corps)

Started more than 40 years ago as one of the original Foster Grandparent programs, the Navajo Nation Foster Grandparent Program serves several hundred Navajo children in schools and Head Start centers throughout the reservation. Grandparents, who often speak only their native language, support the needs of children by providing educational, cultural, and emotional support.

Rural Community Action Program (AmeriCorps VISTA)

RurAL CAP (Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.) is a private, statewide nonprofit organization with a 35-year history of promoting self-sufficiency in Alaska. RurAL CAP serves an audience that is largely Alaska Native and rural, administering a wide range of programs, including weatherization, substance abuse prevention, Head Start and child development, subsistence, energy conservation, and two VISTA and two AmeriCorps programs. A network of ten VISTA members serve throughout the state, assisting their local Tribal and city councils with grant writing, computer training, and other community service needs.

Hoopa Tribal Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps State/National)

Based on the largest reservation in the state with the largest Native American population, the California-based Hoopa Valley Tribal Civilian Community Corps (Hoopa TCCC) operates a ten-month residential program for youth ages 18-24. AmeriCorps members serve in teams of ten to carry out short-

term, high-impact service projects within and outside the Hoopa Valley reservation. Service activities include: home renovation and repair; long-term disaster relief; environmental improvement; mentoring; and large-scale cultural site restoration projects.

Oglala Lakota College (Learn and Serve America)

Wolakolkiciyapi (Living Lakota Ways of Life in Community), Oglala Lakota College's Service-Learning Initiative, builds on the strong desire of students to help their communities address pressing needs among the diverse Native American community in Rapid City and across the 4,500 square mile Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwestern South Dakota, home of the Oglala Lakota. In partnership with a variety of nonprofit and Tribal organizations, college students provide mentoring for K-12 students in reservation schools, engage with early childhood programs, and address identified needs including environmental protection, institution building, and human services in one of the most economically disadvantaged regions of the U.S.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Tribal programs can receive on-site, telephone, or online training and technical assistance through ACKCO, Inc., an Indian-owned professional services organization. For more information, go to www.ackco.com.

TRIBAL ADVISOR: To ensure enhanced communication, education, support, and access for Tribal communities, the Corporation in 2008 has established a full-time Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs. Based in Washington, DC, the position is supported by the Corporation's Tribal Liaison and a network of 50 Field Offices. For more information, go to the "For Indian Communities" section of www.nationalservice.gov.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE: The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation provides opportunities for more than 2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America. For more information, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

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