



## Funding in Indigenous Communities

*For centuries, the Indians farmed the forest through a simple, yet, appropriate technology. To clear a field, the Indian farmer killed the dense overgrowth of trees and vines by a process of girdling, barking, and burning. Then Indians farmed the areas for a few years before allowing it to return to forest and restore the nutrients to the land.*

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## **Funding in Indigenous Communities**

*A Retrospective of the First Four Years of Grantmaking in the  
Indigenous Communities Program*

**1994-1996**



Nevada Desert Grasses

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Great Basin Sky

## Foundation Mission Statement

Lannan Foundation is dedicated to cultural creativity and diversity through its programs, which identify and support exceptional contemporary artists and writers, as well as inspired Native activists in rural indigenous communities.

The foundation recognizes the profound and often unquantifiable value of the creative process and is willing to take risks and make substantial investments in ambitious and experimental thinking.

Understanding that globalization threatens all cultures and ecosystems, the foundation is particularly interested in projects that encourage freedom of inquiry, imagination, and expression.

*This world, our world at the end of the century, our world at the end of the millennium, is blind to itself, unable to take in the horror of the mutilations it suffers or the marvel of the plentitudes it conceals, filled with colors we are not allowed to see and with voices we are not allowed to hear. In the midst of this era of mandatory globalization, which is like an immense factory pumping out cultural clones or clowns for the market circus, these colors and voices keep alive powerful evidence that the best of the world lies in the quantity of worlds the world contains.*

Eduardo Galeano,  
Acceptance Speech for the 1999 Lannan Prize for Cultural Freedom



Hawa'ian Taro Field

## History of Lannan Foundation

In 1960 J. Patrick Lannan, Sr., entrepreneur and financier, established Lannan Foundation. A self-educated scholar and liberal thinker, he believed strongly in the social importance of charitable programs and in the cultural importance of innovative and sometimes controversial forms of visual and literary art.



During his lifetime, Mr. Lannan assembled an extensive collection of contemporary and modern American and European art. Included in his collection were important early works by emerging artists who went on to develop international reputations.

Mr. Lannan died in 1983 at the age of 78. In 1986 Lannan Foundation received a substantial endowment from his estate. Under the leadership of J. Patrick Lannan, Jr., the Art Program continued the expansion of the foundation's collection and instituted national programs for grantmaking in the contemporary visual and literary arts.

In 1986 the foundation's board of directors elected to relocate the organization's headquarters from Lake Worth, Florida to Los Angeles, California. The Lannan Museum in Lake Worth was donated to Palm Beach Community College. In addition, the foundation donated a collection of more than 1,000 American craft objects, approximately 20 works of kinetic art dating from the 1960s and 1970s, and a Tom Otterness frieze, *Battle of the Sexes*, which had been commissioned especially for the building.

On moving to Los Angeles, Lannan Foundation renovated an industrial building in the western section of the city, to house the foundation's administrative offices, exhibition galleries, storage facility, and libraries. In 1992 *The Poetry Garden* was added to the facility. Designed for Lannan Foundation's courtyard by the internationally-known public artist Siah Armajani, The Poetry Garden was intended to serve as a quiet retreat for visitors to the exhibition galleries, as the site for a variety of special events including literary readings and lectures, and as a neighborhood park.

The Art Program is designed to support the creativity of contemporary artists, foster serious discussion of contemporary art, and bring new and sometimes experimental works of visual art to wide audiences. In 1996 the foundation created a museum acquisition and gift program to disperse its collection of modern and contemporary art to museums throughout the U.S. Since the inception of that program, over 500 pieces have been placed at 25 museums making the works accessible to significantly larger and more diverse audiences.

The Literary Program supports the creation of exceptional poetry and prose originally written in the English language. The activities of the program are intended to increase the audience for contemporary literature, as well as to encourage writers and honor their work. The activities include the Lannan Literary Awards, providing substantial monetary assistance to established and emerging writers of poetry, fiction and nonfiction. The Literary Program also produces the Lannan literary videotapes.

In 1994 Lannan initiated the Indigenous Communities Program (ICP) 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 Native cultures and education, the revival and preservation of languages, environmental protection, and legal rights.

Since the inception of its grant programs, the foundation has awarded over five thousand grants in support of contemporary visual art, literary art, indigenous communities and humanitarian organizations.

Collaborative efforts among these three program areas include the Santa Fe-based **Readings & Conversations** series; the residency program for writers; and the Lannan Prize for Cultural Freedom.



Lannan Foundation relocated its offices from Los Angeles to Santa Fe in 1997. Today the foundation's Art, Literary and Indigenous Communities Programs occupy a compound of three buildings located at 313 Read Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

## **History of the Indigenous Communities Program**

In the spring of 1994, members of Lannan Foundation's Board of Directors met with many prominent Native Americans to discuss the critical issues faced by rural indigenous communities. This meeting inaugurated a major initiative dedicated to benefiting rural Native people who suffer from racial and cultural discrimination, lack of educational and economic opportunities, inadequate health care, and widespread poverty. Based on the input of these national leaders, Lannan Foundation began to define its role in offering financial and technical assistance to indigenous community projects. This meeting also set the stage for building partnerships with the organizations with which the foundation works. The meeting included well known Native leaders and activists from the following organizations: Center for Indian Community Development, First Nations Development Institute, Indian Law Resource Center, Indigenous Environmental Network, Seventh Generation Fund, Traditional Circle of Indian Elders, and The American Indian Law Alliance. An advisory committee of Native people was then asked to help direct the board in understanding the issues faced by indigenous communities. Program grantmaking began in July 1994.

The Indigenous Communities Program (ICP) supports the resolve of Native people to renew their communities through their own institutions and traditions. Organizations and projects which are funded must serve Native people and must also be guided and led by Natives. In addition, one of the foundation's goals is to encourage and join with other foundations to increase the financial and technical support of indigenous communities. In the United States, less than one percent of all philanthropic dollars donated annually by individuals and charitable foundations are invested in Native American, Native Hawai'ian or Alaska Native community-based organizations.

The ICP supports Indian led projects located in twenty-nine states. Four grants have been made across borders of the United States at the discretion of the Board of Directors. While Lannan Foundation has supported the efforts of several national organizations, funding priority is primarily given to smaller, grassroots organizations that serve rural communities. Some of the national organizations that have been supported by the foundation include the American Indian College Fund, American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Indigenous Environmental Network, Indigenous Women's Network, First Nations Development Institute, and Seventh Generation Fund. Fifty- six percent of all grants have been awarded to groups associated with one particular tribal identity, and forty-four percent were awarded to organizations serving multi-tribal constituencies and communities.

The foundation not only seeks projects that are based on traditional indigenous values and practices; it is also interested in those projects or organizations that are engaged in new, innovative, or experimental work that is less likely to be supported by mainstream funding sources.

## **ICP Funding Areas and Grants by State 1994-1998**

### **TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND EDUCATION:**

The foundation supports organizations which aim to revive or continue traditional Native belief systems, traditional cultural practices, and traditional knowledge. Organizations supported by the foundation include California Indian Basketweavers Association, Indigenous Environmental Network, Indigenous Women's Network, Ke Kua'aina Hanauna Hou, and San Juan Agricultural Cooperative. (Funds are not granted for religious ceremonial practices.)

### **LANGUAGE PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION:**

Lannan has supported several local efforts toward the revival and perpetuation of Native languages. These projects are located throughout the United States, and involve a number of different languages including Blackfoot, Mohawk, Hawaiian, and Washo. Because many Native American languages are endangered or at risk of becoming extinct, Lannan Foundation's Board of Directors now gives funding priority to language programs that focus on creating the greatest number of strong language speakers in the shortest period of time; immersion style learning, and community-based Master- Apprentice programs have proven to be the most effective method of accomplishing these goals. A strong commitment has been made to language immersion schools, to the training of language immersion teachers, and to the one-on-one training between language masters and their apprentices.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY:**

The foundation supports grassroots organizing efforts in local indigenous communities to defend their lands against environmental injustice. Organizations which have received funds include Diné Citizens Against Ruining our Environment, Western Shoshone Defense Project, Save Ward Valley, and Anishinaabe Nijii. The foundation also supports efforts by groups that implement and advocate for alternative, renewable energy systems, including NativeSUN Hopi Solar Electric Enterprise.

### **LEGAL RIGHTS:**

Lannan Foundation recognizes that the United States legal system can be an important means to advance the rights of indigenous peoples who are struggling to protect their traditional ways of life and their lands. The foundation supports legal efforts that benefit Native issues and causes, particularly in the area of environmental protection and land claims. Examples of organizations and legal battles that have received this kind of support include the Mattaponi Heritage Foundation, the Independent Traditional Seminole Nation, the Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining, the Indian Law Resource Center, the Western Shoshone Defense Project, Ohngo Gaudadeh Devia, and the Gar Creek Seminoles.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

Lannan Foundation's ICP discontinued funding conventional economic development projects in July of 1997. There was evidence that by supporting traditional cultural activities the foundation could support traditional economic development projects in a way that was more congruent with the mission and values of the ICP. The foundation also made its decision with the knowledge that there is significant funding for conventional economic development

projects available by other foundations. Organizations that have received funds that impact traditional culture and economic development include First Nations Development Institute, Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative, Slim Buttes Agricultural Development, and Zuni Organic Farmers Cooperative.

#### **SPECIAL PROJECTS:**

Several large- scale projects have been brought to the attention of the ICP staff and foundation board members by grantees, advisors, friends and acquaintances in indigenous communities throughout the United States. Lannan Foundation recognizes the need to go beyond the regular grant program guidelines and invest in these unique and critical projects.

The foundation is currently working with several Native groups to complete significant model projects. With technical and financial help provided by Lannan Foundation and other organizations, the Independent Traditional Seminoles of Florida have found an appropriate place on more than 2,400 acres in the Everglades to continue their traditional ceremonial practices, to preserve their culture, and to protect one of the most significant ecosystems in the world. The foundation is also supporting such special projects as the building of a new science and technology building and multipurpose ceremonial center at Sinte Gleska University; the development of a scientific mathematical model for reconstructing evidence needed for The Individual Indian Trust Fund Class Action Suit; the promotion of indigenous agriculture and land stewardship models for natural resource management; and the recovery and conservation of ancestral lands being undertaken by such organizations as the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council and the Pueblo of Santa Clara. These grants are developed by invitation from the foundation's board of directors.

#### **ICP GRANTS BY PROGRAM AREA 1994-1998**

Revival and Preservation of Languages 27% - \$ 2,982,300  
Traditional Culture and Education 32% - \$ 3,469,783  
Legal Rights 21% - \$ 2,242,570  
Environmental Protection and Advocacy 11% - \$ 1,216,764  
Economic Development 9% - \$ 1,027,000

#### **LARGE SPECIAL PROJECTS 1994 - 1998**

Traditional Culture and Education 78% - \$ 22,020,153  
Environmental Protection and Advocacy 15% - \$ 4,116,215  
Legal Rights 7% - \$2,000,000

#### **Funding Map 1994 -1998**

During the first four years of grantmaking in indigenous communities, Lannan Foundation awarded more than thirty-eight million dollars in support of Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and Alaska Natives through the ICP grantmaking program and special project awards. A total of 170 grants were given (not including Special Projects grants).

STATE	COMMUNITY GRANTS (96)	STATEWIDE, REGIONAL OR NATIONAL GRANT (74)
Alabama	1	
Alaska	4	
Arizona	10	4
California	14	16
Colorado		4
DC		1
Florida	1	
Hawai'i	4	3
Idaho	1	
Kentucky		1
Maine		1
Maryland		1
Michigan	1	
Minnesota	2	5
Montana	11	9
Nevada	6	2
New Mexico	11	5
New York	1	3
North Dakota		1
Oklahoma	6	3
Oregon	1	
South Carolina	1	
South Dakota	11	4
Texas		1
Utah	2	
Virginia	2	2
Washington		1
Wisconsin	1	3
Wyoming	4	

## Examples of Grantee Experiences by ICP Funding Area 1994-1998

The four program areas of the ICP overlap and intersect in a variety of ways. Two of the most important elements of the continuation of indigenous peoples' cultural survival are the support of traditional culture and language projects. In every indigenous language that is still spoken in the world, one can find an age-old relationship with the land, animals, plants, mountains, rivers, oceans, and sky. Today, there are only 175 Native languages still spoken in North America. There is valuable information about the natural world and human life that is often retained in traditional teachings and practices of indigenous people.

The foundation has learned that by supporting and protecting diversity of culture it is also protecting biodiversity and the earth's ability to sustain itself. Many people are just now beginning to understand the value and the power of such relationships and of the critically valuable knowledge that is contained within so many indigenous languages and cultures.



Sicangu Lakota Elder, South Dakota

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*Cultures around the world, whether they are long-tenured and place-based or nomadic and migratory, are constantly checking the pulse of the universe and their place in their own way. Often the personifications of these elements identify them in familiar terms and emphasize the important role they play in daily life. In their own context and on their own terms this is their representation of sacredness. For many place-based people this seamless connection between a people's culture and their environment is fundamental to keeping their place healthy in order to survive.*

Director, Zuni Conservation Project

The foundation has been challenged with how to support the integration of traditional values and wisdom in modern culture. Staff and board members have learned much from those who are deeply and spiritually connected with the earth. Many indigenous peoples are dedicating themselves to passing on traditional values to young people of this generation and for many generations to follow.

The funding areas supported by Lannan Foundation -Traditional Culture and Education, Language Preservation and Revitalization, Environmental Protection and Advocacy, and Legal Rights - are interrelated. Each area is contained within a traditional circle of values and practices.

The following examples of grantee experiences are derived from interviews with six different grantee organizations and represent each of the original program funding areas. Overall, the reviewers collected more than 100 interviews from the 33 participating grantees.

### ***Traditional Culture and Education***

Throughout its history, Lannan has supported the various voices of culture through its Art and Literary Programs, and more recently through the Indigenous Communities Program. The sharing of different cultures allows creative exchanges among peoples, communities, and countries.



Tohono O'odham Basket

Many indigenous peoples have maintained their cultures and their homelands for generations by preserving the knowledge of their ceremonies, songs, local medicines and land bases. This

relationship to the land allows not only for the protection of the ecosystem, it is the living continuation and survival of traditional culture. Today, the cultures and lifeways of traditional Native peoples continue to be marginalized as they face the pressures of an increasingly homogenized world. Entire Native communities are being displaced by mining extraction, hydroelectric plants, parks and resorts, and other forms of economic and urban development. Native languages continue to be lost as a result of the geographical relocation of many Native Americans (including the fact that many children were sent away to boarding schools and forbidden to use their native tongues beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing until the 1970's.) Ceremonial land is being threatened by corporate development and industrial mining. Conversation and story-telling has been replaced in many indigenous communities by television.

**Sample Grantee:**

The Tohono O'odham Basketweavers Organization (TOBO) is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and perpetuating Tohono O'odham basketweaving as an honored cultural practice and a viable economic enterprise. The majority of the basketweavers live in small villages across the Tohono O'odham Reservation in southern Arizona. Since the organization's beginning in 1996 it has grown to include over 200 weavers, both young and old, male and female. The director of TOBO's Elder and Youth Outreach Program has been weaving for over 50 years. She says of her work with TOBO, "I give a lot of my own time to teaching, but I see that there's so much interest out there that I wish I were ten people that could go every which way. But they tell me to slow down. It's just something that I dreamed, that someday the weaving would be there, coming back up again instead of dying. TOBO is bringing it back together. The elders are saying that this is the way it was before."

Weavers and other members of the community gather together for basketweaving meetings, to make seasonal trips to collect yucca, beargrass, and willow, and to work with other local organizations. TOBO is currently working with local schools teaching weaving to students and with a youth wellness program teaching traditional weaving and farming practices to youths. TOBO has also established working relationships with different tribes, museums, and land services organizations. The president and a founding member of TOBO has been weaving for over 17 years and, at 28 years of age, has become a role model for the young and old alike. As busy as he is with his travels and weaving, he always makes it a point to set aside time to teach young people the traditional skills developed over time by his people.

Basketweaving gives the community a sense of pride. The traditional role of elders in the community is re-emerging through weaving, and the traditional stories are once again being told. The language is being used and taught to the younger weavers as they begin to participate more in the gatherings. A volunteer with TOBO says of her work, "What I do here I share with the community. There are words in our language that I have never heard before and I am learning them from the elders. I love to talk to the elders and listen to them talk in our language. As old as I am, I am still learning."

For the Elder and Youth Outreach Program director, weaving is a way of life. "My life is not complete if I am not weaving," she says. "It is who I am, it is a part of me." Her granddaughter admits that for many years she was embarrassed by who she was

as a Native person. Once she began weaving this began to change. Like her grandmother, she realized that weaving is a part of who she is. "Nobody can take that away from me," she says. "I started weaving and spending more time with my grandma, and now I am learning more about who I am." She is now a role model in her community and works with other young people on various community projects.

Other examples of grassroots organizations that have received support for traditional culture projects include the California Indian Basketweavers Association, The Hopi Foundation, The Pueblo of Zuni, and Traditional Native American Farmers Association.



Tohono O'odham Basket

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*For many of today's weavers, baskets are interwoven into the very fabric of tribal life and culture. They are an important part of the identity of most of our tribes. Some say the baskets are alive and their spirit continues to bring them into being. Most basketweavers share a strong spiritual foundation for their work and a commitment to preserving a great tradition. It is one which is intrinsically linked to the land – to the health and growth of plants, to the spirits of gathering sites. To animals which appear as designs, to the people – their births, lives, deaths, ceremonial, songs and stories, all of which have a relationship to different kinds of baskets.*

Member of the California Indian Basketweavers Association

### ***Language Preservation and Revitalization***

Cultural traditions, practices, and protocols are woven within Native languages. In North America today, only 175 out of more than 300 Native languages are still spoken, with only

20 of these languages spoken by mothers to their children. Believed to be a way of maintaining one's path to both the ancestors and to a religious ceremonial life, passing on a language is a sacred responsibility. Unique initiatives to save tribal languages, including master apprentice programs and language immersion schools, are now underway. Educators realize that teaching indigenous peoples through their own institutions and languages can also be a healthy solution to many other social problems.

According to one language immersion school teacher, a Native child attending public school only learns to understand who he is not; he never really learns who he is. "Most Native children find themselves in a world where they look upon the walls but don't see their art; listen to music but don't hear their music; listen to language but it's not their language; they see people that don't look like the people in their villages or communities. We begin to see a disintegration of self based on conspicuous absence. We're not doing anything to intentionally damage people, but we do it through conspicuous absence."

As Native nations realize the rapid rate at which they are losing their mother tongues, language immersion is becoming a proven option for saving language and culture. Language immersion is an educational process, which aims to teach children to practice their language and culture through prayer, singing, writing, and conversation, as well as conventional academic subjects such as math, history, science, and literature. Seeing Native children truly happy in education and social settings because they know their language and cultural identity is a source of inspiration to Lannan Foundation's staff and board members.

In order to ensure the transmission of language between generations, a core group of committed people and educators must be willing to take a risk in stepping outside of accepted educational institutions. A strong language community can be built through participatory community research and planning processes to develop language schools. The major challenges for these schools are to build and maintain organizations, and to gain infrastructure and capacity. This includes developing administrative and organization skills, constructing new buildings, nurturing Native speakers to become teachers, developing culturally specific curriculum, and securing long-term financial resources.

**Sample Grantee:**

The Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS) in Racquette Point, New York was created in 1979 by the traditional Longhouse Akwesasne Mohawk people and their supporters. The Traditional Clan Mothers and Faithkeepers recommended educating the children through Mohawk culture and language, so parents developed curriculum material from the teachings of the traditional Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address, which offers gratitude to the earth and all of creation. Holding their first two years of classes in a garage, the Akwesasne Freedom School became a demonstration project on how not to abide by New York State law and for reclaiming sovereignty through culture and language.

Today many Native people feel that one cannot be traditional without knowing and speaking the language. Parents and elders operate the Freedom School by a consensus decision making process with financial support primarily from annual quilt sales and pot-luck dinners. Currently, they are building a new campus on donated land to accommodate children on a waiting list. One parent tells of her daughter attending the

Freedom School: "It changed her. Now she makes her own decisions and is proud of her heritage. And she hasn't had any problems in the transition into going to an English-only high school. She is asserting herself, and she knows her culture. She opened the treaty workshop at the Longhouse recently and is graduating from high school this year."

Twenty years later founders say that they are better parents for participating in the Freedom School and their children know who they are as Mohawks. The second generation of AFS students is now asked to assist local public schools with their Mohawk language programs, and are also opening governmental meetings and traditional ceremonies in the Mohawk language.

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*I feel like there is a part gone from me because I don't have the language, but my children and grandchildren can get that back. My family had become Christian – there were no Longhouse people left among us. I started participating in the ceremonies and it introduced me to a culture that should have belonged to me since birth. At first there was resistance from my family, asking, "Why is Mohawk relevant today?" I couldn't tell them at first; now they understand how deeply I am involved and they are accepting it with me. I am the first in tow or three generations to go back to the Longhouse. My great grandmother was a Clan mother and my grandparents were Longhouse Chiefs, so I really feel the responsibility of being the first one to go back to the Longhouse.*

Akwesasne Freedom School parent and community volunteer

## ***Environmental Protection and Advocacy***

For thousands of years indigenous peoples have maintained a spiritual and cultural relationship with the land. Some indigenous communities are located on land which supports some of the greatest biodiversity in the world. Many of these communities struggle to practice their place-based cultures that could not easily be retained or regained if the land should be disturbed or poisoned. In the last three hundred years this relationship has diminished as communities have been relocated and their land, water, air and natural resources have been exploited. Many communities are engaged in long-term legal battles to protect and control their land, water, and minerals, as well as to fight new threats of nuclear waste storage, landfills, large-scale hog farms, clear cutting and mining. At the same time, many tribes protect a wealth of natural resources. As protectors, these tribes may sometimes set higher environmental standards than the counties or the states that surround them (such as the Isleta Pueblo's success in setting and enforcing higher water purity standards from their upstream neighbor, the city of Albuquerque).



Yarrow Plant

### **Sample Grantee:**

One community project reflecting ancient culture and modern technology at work together is the NativeSUN Hopi Solar Electric Enterprise Project. This project began under the leadership of the Hopi Foundation, a community based organization whose mission is to promote self-sufficiency, local self-determination, and proactive community participation among Hopi people while also enhancing and preserving the Hopi traditional way of life.

Located on Third Mesa in northeastern Arizona, the Hopi Foundation was established fourteen years ago by a group of Hopi people seeking alternative ways to increase local community development that also preserves Hopi traditions. Today, the Hopi Foundation assists Hopi communities in project development while at the same time builds partnerships, develops human capacity, enhances financial management and conflict resolution skills, and provides community members with local employment. Multi-year funding enabled the Hopi Foundation to focus on organizational development, capacity building and resource development, specifically in the area of endowment building. ICP grant funding for both the Hopi Foundation and NativeSUN Hopi Solar Electric Enterprise Project provided support for the Foundation's daily operations, program creation, an office building, staff salaries, and a centralized demonstration project office for educational tours where local, national and international visitors learn how to create community-owned businesses that specialize in alternative energy technology.



Purple Iris

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*There is too much automation these days. We don't read anymore, but instead turn on the television. There is no sense of self. When I go out into the forest, I don't want to hear a radio or even an airplane. I want to hear the wind and the trees, this gives me a sense of feeling with the earth, this place that we live. I watch as the animals scurry by, and I think to myself that there are pesticides that harm these creatures and 22-shotguns that kill them...I try to return to the old ways of the earth, I want the quietness and relaxation. Nowadays, people ride in a car, going seventy miles per hour, taking in all they can over the course of hundreds of miles in a day. I rode my horse in the old days and only covered a couple of miles. And this was enough. All of my information came from the earth.*

Elder, Jicarilla Apache Tribe

There are twelve Hopi villages on the 1.5 million-acre reservation, four of which do not allow electric lines across their land. Respect for traditional cultural ways and a resistance to harming the environment leaves hundreds of Hopi people without modern, electrical conveniences. In its beginning, NativeSUN faced some adversity in introducing new technology -- harnessing solar energy was believed to be "taking away from the father sun." Today, these sentiments have been overcome with the installation of over three hundred solar systems in remote Hopi and Navajo homes (especially among the community elders).

In the village of Old Oraibi, which was established as early as 1550 and does not allow electric lines in the village, the reviewers visited the Old Oraibi Arts and Crafts Store, where a NativeSUN customer was listening to the radio and enjoying colored lights for the Christmas season. She enjoys all the modern conveniences needed for sewing, ironing and running a business, while still respecting the elders' wishes of not running electrical lines across the land. "I do not have to chop wood anymore and the lights are much brighter so my eyes don't get as tired. I've learned to use a regular bulb with low wattage when I am sewing or doing art projects. I have realized that I do not need so many lights--solar power has made me think differently about these things. When I go shopping for lamps or light bulbs, I always look at the wattage and how many amps they use!" In this way NativeSUN and its customers are making a contribution to safeguarding the global environment while meeting the needs of a contemporary village based on traditional cultural values.

## *Legal Rights*

Protecting the rights of indigenous peoples—especially human rights, cultural rights, and environmental rights—is at the heart of the ICP's mission. Grant funds and legal technical assistance have been awarded to indigenous communities involved in land acquisition and recovery, protests against toxic dumping and mining, protection of sacred cultural sites, and the validation of Indian treaty rights.



Traditional Seminole Nation Spokesperson

### **Sample Grantee:**

The Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC) was established in 1978 and is located in Helena, Montana with field offices in Washington D.C., Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Anchorage, Alaska. Although Lannan currently makes very few grants to national organizations, its partnership with the ILRC has been key to working with indigenous peoples and institutions to protect their legal rights. The Center's long term work with traditional indigenous communities such as the Independent Traditional Seminole Nation, Iroquois, and Western Shoshone combines legal rights, human rights and environmental protection. For the last twenty years, many of the original staff and board at the Center have been working with these same Native American communities. The Center has also developed long-term working relationships with indigenous communities in Central and South America. It has also been active in advocating for indigenous rights internationally through many years of working through the United Nations.

The Indian Law Resource Center recognizes that when one culture ceases to exist, the entire world is diminished. It also recognizes that the legacy of colonialism correlates

to the U.S. federal government's permanent trusteeship of sovereign nations, which is often involuntarily accepted by many tribes. In response to these dangers which threaten the survival of indigenous culture, the ILRC and Lannan Foundation have formed partnerships with traditional peoples, which encourages them to implement their own traditional governing structures while retaining legal rights to the land.

"There is a long standing U.S. law that the federal government can violate treaties at will! This system is built upon a body of discriminatory and irrational doctrines and must be challenged until reform happens. It isn't just about filing a lawsuit, but to build the capacity of the tribes at the same time. It is important to empower people to be able to advocate for their own rights, and to be creative about what law is. It is best and most useful to understand that it is all one thing— the welfare of the entire earth including the people—is a unitary thing. We don't just link human rights to environmental protection, we do it all at the same time. It is dead simple to understand in terms of the Seminole project in Florida where it is all one thing. It is not a conservation project, or a cultural preservation project or a land rights project. It is all one thing. They are not interested in land rights; the Seminoles don't actually want to own the land as such— they don't even think that way. But yes, they think a lot about keeping that land wild; they think a lot about keeping their culture, which depends on that. It is the same thing with the Anamami in Belize or the Dann family at Western Shoshone. These are places where it is all one thing, the human welfare and the welfare of the culture and communities is all one thing with the preservation of the ecosystem and the conservation of the land and flora." Executive Director, ILRC.



South Dakota Badlands

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*For indigenous peoples, few things more compellingly bind together the past, present and future of their cultures than their relationship to their aboriginal lands. Put simply, land is the basis for all life. The recovery and legal recognition of indigenous land rights is essential to ensuring the survival of future generations.*

Indian Law Resource Center's Annual Report

## ***Economic Development***

Many indigenous communities try to maintain and develop local economies based on traditional principles involving subsistence practices. Agriculture in many American communities has now become agribusiness, using machinery and industrialized processing methods, including genetically altered seeds and toxins, such as pesticides and herbicides. Traditional farmers in Native communities, on the other hand, take into account the culture and history of their people and land, use no toxins on the crops grown, and are concerned more for the sustainability of the people than for the cash income produced. Subsistence and survival for many Native peoples means sustainability of the earth for the next seven generations of life.

The degradation of the earth's environment is a problem for all of humanity to consider, yet the persistent search for mineral wealth and fossil fuels has left Native and other minority communities bearing much of the impact of negative environmental consequences. Development of nuclear waste facilities, uranium mining, and other forms of harmful development, is leaving long-term, devastating effects on human beings and on the natural environment. These industries continue to displace the cultural traditions and development of communities, offering instead short-term economic gain. Many tribes have begun the search for innovative alternative energy resources and economic development plans that are environmentally healthy and compatible with traditional culture.

Examples of endeavors that support the economic sustenance, the cultural values, and healthy maintenance of the environment in indigenous communities include agriculture and aquacultural projects such as traditional farming and seaweed cultivation, bison restoration programs, and traditional basketweaving.

### **Sample Grantee:**

The Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative (ITBC), an organization with a membership of 47 Native American tribes, is dedicated to restoring bison to Indian nations in a manner that is compatible with Native spiritual and cultural beliefs and practices. The Cooperative supports bison projects that are designed and undertaken at the grassroots level, working with grassroots people of each member tribe. In addition to the cultural benefits of returning buffalo to reservations, jobs are also being created in tanneries, meat processing facilities, and apparel manufacturing. Other jobs are available as artists and artisans. One venture that is proving to be economically viable, environmentally responsible, and culturally appropriate is the distribution of buffalo meat to members of the communities. The meat is leaner, has more protein than beef, and is a traditional way of feeding people.

In Winnebago, Nebraska, for example, an ITBC board member and herd manager for the Winnebago Tribe works with youth on the reservation. Currently his work includes the development of a diabetes prevention program and improving the health and diet of young people on the reservation. "We are getting the youth to exercise more and to change their diet so that they move away from the post-treaty diet and go back to the pre-treaty diet as much as possible," he says. "I don't think the American public knows what they are getting from the livestock industry today. They trust them and they don't know what's on their plate." The young people also help him work in the buffalo pastures, putting up fences or laying foundations. As they work in the field he tells them, "Watch those buffalo, watch them. For an hour today we are going to sit on the hill and see how the buffalo graze, see how they play. See how they take care of each other. They are a big family out there." Through observation over time, youth come to realize that these buffalo are not just individual animals out in a field, but that they are a family, they are a clan, and they all work together.

This increasing awareness of what the buffalo has meant to Native American people has had a very positive impact on many reservation communities. The pride that is now being renewed through the reintegration of the buffalo is significant. As the number of buffalo increase on tribal lands, buffalo ceremonies, songs, and spiritual activities are also increasing. The spiritual health of a community is tightly interwoven with its environment and its economy, including health status, cultural vitality, education, language, and traditional ceremonial life.

Another example is the Fort Belknap Tribe in Montana. The tribe has increased its bison herd from 62 to more than 300 with the help of ITBC. It has also expanded its buffalo pasture from 3,900 acres to over 10,000 acres. An ITBC Board Member and Director of the Fort Belknap Tribe's Fish and Wildlife Department says of their current bison project, "The project really touches all areas of the community-the college students observing in the fields; the Headstart kids taking tours of the buffalo facilities; there are at least five community talks every fall on the buffalo; and also visiting with the Boys and Girls Club, giving talks and tours."

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*Hopi ceremonies are performed for the Hopi people, and are also performed for the world. The Hopi approach is holistic, a vision for the world. We sustain things for people. Everything is connected. For thousands of years, the Hopi people have lived in a demanding ecological relationship with a desert environment. Today, facing an escalating global environmental crisis, the world community has become acutely aware of the limits and depletion of nonrenewable natural resources.*

NativeSUN Annual Report

## ***Special Projects***

Recognizing the need to take risks and to sometimes fund projects which are outside of the regular program area guidelines, the foundation supports unique and critical projects brought to its attention by staff, board members, community advisors, friends, and elders.

Lannan Foundation's first ICP grant award was given to a tribal college. When the Indigenous Communities Program was established five years ago, staff and board were particularly struck by the lack of adequate buildings, offices, libraries, and classroom materials at many tribal colleges. They also noticed that what has kept many of these colleges operating is sheer determination. In a time when education, in general, is suffering throughout the United States, tribal colleges, in particular, are struggling to stay open. Federal funding comprises nearly ninety percent of most tribal college budgets, but that is still only half of what the federal government grants to mainstream, non-Indian community colleges.



Traditional Seminole Women and Child, Florida

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According to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), a cooperatively sponsored effort on the part of 32 member institutions in the United States and Canada, the typical profile of the tribal college student is as follows: *Attends school part-time. An Indian woman. Average age is 27 years old. A single mother of young children. Often dependent on welfare or her extended family for support. Many are in need of basic remediation.*

Most tribal colleges are located on remote Indian reservations. They are sometimes chartered by one or more Indian tribes, and are identified and funded as land-grant institutions. Most of these institutions are also in critical need of improved facilities in order to attract and sustain faculty and students. The colleges serve more than 26,500 full-time and part-time students per year, ranging from 150 full-time students at the smaller schools to more than 2,000 students at some of the larger institutions. Although this figure has increased from 10,000 students since 1989, this is still just a fraction of the total number of students attending conventional community colleges.

There are 32 tribal colleges and universities located throughout North America. These institutions primarily offer two-year certificates and degrees. Six colleges offer four-year degrees, and two colleges offer graduate degrees. Most of these colleges offer a land-based curriculum, which means that the core curriculum is focused on the tribe's Native language and culture and local economic needs. These areas are critical to the survival of a tribe's culture and language. It is important that these institutions are close to home because many students choose, for cultural or personal reasons, not to leave their communities. Tribal colleges are the only opportunity many Native people have to obtain a higher education close to home. In some communities the commute can be as far as ninety miles, but still allows for the student to maintain a relationship with his or her family at home.

**Sample Grantee:**

Sinte Gleska University (SGU), located on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota, began as a two-year community college in 1971 and has since become the first tribal college to gain accreditation at both the baccalaureate and master degree levels. Lannan Foundation has committed special project funds to the building of a new science and technology building, a multipurpose ceremonial center, and technical assistance for building organizational capacity and fundraising expertise.

Located in the fourth poorest county in the United States, Sinte Gleska University offers the community a source of hope, pride, and respect. Some of the degrees offered by the university include: Business, Education, Fine Arts, Human Services, and Lakota Studies. A master's degree in Elementary Education is offered and more degrees are being planned. Sinte Gleska has trained hundreds of Native teachers since the inception of its education program in 1989, and many of the graduates are currently teaching throughout the United States as well as in other parts of South Dakota.

Students living in the community often find jobs after they graduate. Many also have an easier time finding a job while still attending school. Mental health and healthcare counseling services are offered at the university (many of the students are on their way to becoming counselors themselves). The university also offers workshops on mental health and educational issues to members of the extended Rosebud community. Not only does the university help to educate and develop its current student body, it is also not unusual to find two or three generations of a family participating in university activities and events. Jobs are available within the university community for teaching, administration, computer sciences, and building trades.

Today, there is a sense of pride and accomplishment among the people of the Rosebud Reservation. A senior at Sinte Gleska University, who will be going on to graduate school next year at the University of South Dakota, became involved with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium through the university and has traveled to Washington D.C. as a representative of SGU. "I learned a lot about my people, my culture, and how to work with other people," he says of his experience. "I think more positively now. What can you do with your education? Anything you put your mind to."



Sinte Gleska University, Science & Tech, Bldg.

Some of the other special projects have included the preservation of traditional ceremonial lands, the development of a model for the recovery of Individual Indian Trust Fund monies, and the building of new language immersion schools.

## Retrospective Review Methodology

The foundation embarked upon this retrospective review of its first four years of grant-making in the Indigenous Communities Program to evaluate its progress in assisting Native peoples to renew their own institutions and traditions. The entire text is more than three hundred pages. It is available upon request from Lannan Foundation. This summary of the review is being sent to foundations, donors, grantees and policymakers throughout North America.

The retrospective is intended to be used as both an internal organizational learning process and tool, and as an external learning report that can be shared with grantees, colleagues, friends, policymakers, and a wide variety of donors. Also, the foundation is engaged in an ongoing process of improving its grantmaking by reflecting upon and sharing what has been learned by experience.

The methodology of this retrospective was based upon listening, and, more specifically, it was designed to encourage the telling of stories; to hear what kinds of questions, issues, actions, results, relationships, and dreams are important to people in Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native communities. This evaluation also sought out new ideas and strategies about how the Indigenous Communities Program can be more helpful and effective in offering financial and technical assistance to rural indigenous communities.

Because the foundation's staff and board believe that indigenous peoples have important cultural traditions that should be shared with other people around the world, it is pursuing creative ways to promote the values and visions of the indigenous communities and projects from which it has learned over the years. Lannan believes that supporting indigenous communities has profound implications for the future of all cultures and all ecosystems.

To begin this retrospective evaluation the foundation assembled a team of ICP staff and consultants in April 1998 to design the review process. Two reviewers studied internal documents and interviewed ICP committee members, advisors, and grantees. The review includes interviews with 33 grantees, ranging from the Indigenous Communities Program's first grant-making year in 1994 through December 1998. Interviews and site visits were conducted through June 1999.

Each of the selected grantee organizations that participated in the interview process was involved in either a telephone interview or a two-day site visit. The organization's project director, a board member, and a community representative were interviewed. Telephone interviews included 16 grantees and site visit interviews included 17 grantees. Ten interview questions were provided to each of the participants prior to the interviews.

The ICP staff and committee intend to incorporate what has been learned from this evaluation into their current and future grantmaking—to make grants that are optimally useful and effective to Native communities. The foundation hopes that its findings will help to promote the merits of grant-making in Native communities, and to increase the number of other foundations, donors, and institutions giving support to these communities.

### **The Retrospective Review Included a Range of Grantees, Based on the Following Criteria:**

- *organizational types and sizes.* Although funding priority is currently given to smaller grassroots organizations, reviewers interviewed grantees from national organizations including Seventh Generation Fund, First Nations Development Institute, and Indigenous Environmental Network. Examples of regional organizations interviewed include Traditional Native American Farmers Association and InterTribal Bison Cooperative. Examples of smaller organizations serving communities which are indigenous to specific rural geographic locations include Western Shoshone Defense Project located in Crescent Valley, Nevada; Ohngo Gaudadeh Devia located on the Skull Valley Goshute Shoshone Reservation in western Utah; and Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay located on the Washoe Reservation in western Nevada.
- *organization locations.* The review includes 33 organizations from 14 states including the Gwich'in Steering Committee in Arctic Village, Alaska; White Earth Land Recovery Project in Ponsford, Minnesota; the Native Lands Institute Mauna Kea project in Hilo, Hawai'i; and the Zuni Organic Farmers Cooperative in Zuni, New Mexico.
- *funding amounts.* Grants were chosen that varied in amounts from \$5,000 for outreach and education work to a special grant of \$10,000,000 for tribal college campus expansion.
- *funding areas.* Grantees were chosen from each of the program's funding areas: Traditional Culture and Education, Language Preservation and Revitalization, Environmental Protection and Advocacy, Legal Rights, Special Projects, and Economic Development (which the foundation no longer funds).
- *single and multi-year grantees.* Both single and multi-year grants were included in the review.
- *past and current grantees.* Organizations having both past and current grantee status were included in the evaluation. The grant years include 1994 through 1998.

## **Grantees Participating in Retrospective Interviews**

### **TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

California Indian Basketweavers Association. Nevada City, California  
Hopi Foundation. Hotevilla, Arizona  
Indigenous Women's Network. Rapid City, South Dakota  
Pueblo of Zuni. Zuni, New Mexico  
Seventh Generation Fund. Arcata, California  
Tohono O'odham Basketweavers Organization. Sells, Arizona  
Traditional Native American Farmers Association. Santa Fe, New Mexico  
White Earth Land Recovery Project. Ponsford, Minnesota  
Zuni Organic Farmers Cooperative. Zuni, New Mexico

### **LANGUAGE PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION**

Akwesasne Freedom School. Racquette Point, New York  
Cochiti Pueblo. Cochiti, New Mexico  
Jicarilla Apache Tribe. Dulce, New Mexico  
Juaneño Band of Mission Indians. Santa Ana, California  
Linguistic Institute for Native Americans. Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Oglala Lakota College. Kyle, South Dakota  
Piegan Institute. Browning, Montana  
Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay. Gardnerville, Nevada

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY**

Anishinaabe Nijiji. Hayward, Wisconsin  
Dineh Alliance. Piñon, Arizona  
Save Ward Valley. Needles, California  
Gwich'in Steering Committee. Arctic Village, Alaska  
Hopi NativeSUN Solar Electric Enterprise. Kykotsmovi, Arizona  
Indigenous Environmental Network. Bemidji, Minnesota  
Native Lands Institute. Hilo, Hawai'i  
Sokaogon Chippewa Community. Crandon, Wisconsin

## **LEGAL RIGHTS**

Indian Law Resource Center. Helena, Montana

Native Action, Inc. Lame Deer, Montana

Ohngo Gaudadeh Devia. Tooele, Utah

Western Shoshone Defense Project. Crescent Valley, Nevada

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

First Nations Development Institute. Fredericksburg, Virginia

InterTribal Bison Cooperative. Rapid City, South Dakota

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Blackfoot Reservation Development Fund. Browning, Montana

Sinte Gleska University. Rosebud, South Dakota

## Examples of Grantee Responses and Reviewer Commentaries:

### *1. What was the vision or dream that brought about a relationship with the Lannan Indigenous Communities Program (ICP)? Do you believe the vision/dream has been realized, or has it changed?*

#### RESPONSE:

“The language project came about because we were seeing the deterioration of our culture in younger people—the youth did not know anything about our culture and traditions. It must be brought to the attention of people as a serious problem. Once upon a time, our people were strong both physically and mentally, and without this identity we are extinct of our culture and language. If our culture is lost, our identity is lost. The truth needs to be brought out—the understanding of the stars and the moon—and if this understanding is lost, we cannot continue to communicate. We are not advocating a worldwide teaching of our ways, but that our own people can continue to know our ways.” Elder and Community Member, Jicarilla Apache Tribe

#### COMMENTARY:

Most of the visions shared with the reviewers were long-term dreams for sustainability and continuity with a timeline of seven generations. This term is explained in the Great Law on the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy) which requires that chiefs consider the impact of their decisions on the seventh generation. Many felt that immediate goals had been reached or were within reach because of the foundation's partnership and support. The community or organizational vision was either to retain or regain a component of its culture, which for some people had been lost through forced relocation or threatened by natural resource exploitation. The shared vision was usually broad, containing different elements from each of the ICP funding program areas: Traditional Culture and Education, Environmental Protection and Advocacy, Legal Rights, and Language Preservation and Revitalization. Many of the grantees' visions expressed similar concerns: that land and water be saved from destruction; that indigenous children be educated in their Native language and culture; that land claims be reactivated and pursued; that the land be returned to Native people who were the original protectors of the land; and, that the traditional values and spiritual part of the culture be retained. There were stories of hope and renewal. There was strong evidence of revitalization in indigenous communities; there is strength, sovereignty, and growing experience between grantees and funders learning how to work together as equal partners.

### *2. What happened as a result of the grant from Lannan?*

#### RESPONSE:

“As we developed hands-on workshops we were able to acknowledge and pay honoraria to our own resource people who teach the courses. What this does is recognize and validate the information they have as opposed to going to university scholars. Not that I oppose this type of learning. I encourage our youth to study and to get into colleges and universities, but the knowledge that we have in our own communities is just as valid and just as important. Prior

to the Traditional Native American Farmers Association's development, every time a tribe went out to look at agricultural development they always went to outside resources. They always went outside their communities for experts in the field and overlooked the wealth of knowledge in their own communities. The Association has made an effort to retain that critical information and even universities are beginning to acknowledge this information.”  
Director, Traditional Native American Farmers Association

**COMMENTARY:**

Foundation funding validates the vision and acknowledges the importance of indigenous cultures. Indigenous organizations are creating solutions for healing their people, protecting their land, and stabilizing the civic atmosphere on their reservations. Important groundwork is being done, and although results are not immediate, progress towards the vision is being accomplished. Lannan funds allow for gatherings, which is vital for educating and sharing information. Funding also allows the organization to concentrate on the job to be done. Funds for traveling to visit and learn from other grantees has been made possible. Funding for media campaigns and legal research has benefited some communities. Community education and workshops have been organized. Grantee organizations have provided jobs in economically marginalized rural areas where otherwise such employment opportunities would not exist. Funding has also provided needed buildings, office space, and administrative infrastructure. These organizations have become fertile incubators for capacity building, community development, and project spin-offs.

***3. Who participated in the project?***

**RESPONSE:**

“We involve the whole community in what we do. The Gwich'in staff, the people of Arctic Village, and the youth all participated. Any time that a congressional delegation or media meeting is held in our village, the elders always participate. They speak at all of the meetings. The youth are also involved in different ways— through their schools and also through slide show presentations. This is public-interest land. Our interest of the Gwich'in people is human rights. In Alaska we have to educate our own people about what is going on because they want to know. There are two hundred villages in Alaska, just like Arctic Village, where they hunt and fish and have no running water and are very isolated.”  
Spokesperson and Community Member, Gwich'in Steering Committee

**COMMENTARY:**

Indigenous issues affect all human beings. One of the most enduring attributes of indigenous peoples is their friendship and generosity. This was reflected in the diversity and depth of caring shown by participants and supporters of the community projects. Generally, large numbers of people and families participated in the different community projects on various levels. Both emerging and experienced grassroots leaders provide the impetus for community action and development. Often, it is these leaders who secure and manage nearly all of the human and financial resources needed to launch and sustain the community project. The tribal elders' commitment and involvement is critical for cultural community projects, as keepers of wisdom, traditional mentors, teachers, and as carriers of spiritual instructions passed down to them by their ancestors. Involving Native youth through school activities,

language and culture after-school programs, and community volunteerism is a vital link to maintaining their health, self-esteem, and identity.

Most grantee organizations recognized that members of their staff and their board of directors often played many different roles; as project spokespeople, leaders, mentors, technical assistance providers, and knowledge keepers. Many of the organizations that were evaluated survive on volunteer labor. The contributions of elders, family members and friends, and parents of youth participants are critical. Most ICP grantees also work in alliances with non-indigenous people—friends, experts, teachers, and a myriad of government agencies, negotiating toward agreements with agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Indian Health Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Some organizations also established working relationships with Canadian and Mexican governments, and with other indigenous communities in Central and South America.

#### ***4. Do you believe anyone benefited?***

##### **RESPONSE:**

“If we were not to do this project we would lose our language. There are only a handful of elders left who have heard the stories, and they no longer practice storytelling. There are other mediums today that have replaced the storytelling and the quiet time before going to bed. The Washiw language has been lost in the English translations. We now use Washiw storytelling in the curriculum. The language creates a respect for elders and the tradition. The students benefit, the teachers have gained experience in teaching and setting up a curriculum. They have also benefited from being with other teachers and speakers and learning the language base more. The community benefits through our parent language immersion classes, which are held once a week. The language has benefited all of the people who have come in contact with it.” Director, Washiw'itlu Gawgayay Immersion School

##### **COMMENTARY:**

Because many of the most important benefits of receiving grants in indigenous communities are long-term, they may not be immediately seen or touched. When Native people interviewed discussed pride, self-esteem, being connected to the earth, culture, and their ancestors, oftentimes, the English words did not suffice. The tangible benefits (i.e., salary funds for staff, teacher training support, funds designated for purchasing a whaling rope or a tractor, workshop honorariums, operating funds) were immediately utilized and a large number of people benefited from these grant funds. Both the grantee and funding organizations benefit by forming a relationship—gaining insight about the importance of indigenous cultures, sovereignty, community sustainability, and sharing creativity and appreciation for the wide range of projects taking place in indigenous communities. This increased awareness of indigenous issues benefits community members, funders, educators, and policy makers, as well as many others outside of the community.

#### ***5. Has the grant had an impact on your organization or the community? If so, how? (Skills, relationships, education, resources...)***

**RESPONSE:**

“The effort is contagious. The community is much more aware now. The Keres language is making its way into the homes; it makes people interact. The program has also had a carry-over into the Tribal Council. The ceremonies are now performed in the language and the message has come across clear to the community. It is a showcase project for the community because there is so much creativity that emerges. English will always be available to the people, Keres will not. When I was a child and would walk through that gate, right outside the office building, we were told to leave our Indian behind. Nowadays, when you walk through that gate you must leave your English behind. It is not just a language program, it is a cultural program.” Tribal Governor and Community Member, Cochiti Pueblo Summer Language Program

**COMMENTARY:**

Indigenous people have a strong sense of their own identity. When they are given sufficient support to put their plans into action the impact can be felt throughout the community. When they are able to meet and work with other indigenous peoples, this has a significant impact on the capacity and skills of an organization's staff, volunteers, and community participants of the project. Grassroots leaders have emerged out of rural indigenous community organizations where they have gained the skills, relationships, and support to make a difference. Community members become more involved when the common interest to be shared is based on culture, often inspiring a wide range of participants, including youth and elders. People inspired and engaged in working for community-wide benefits model a path to wellness and community wholeness that is vitalizing. This hope and energy is spreading throughout Native communities as they begin to heal and see possibilities for their children's futures and for future generations.

***6. Has this grant helped you attract other human or financial resources?***

**RESPONSE:**

“I think just being able to use Lannan Foundation's name as a supporter and to say, ‘we received help here,’ just using it that way has helped in attracting other financial resources. Also, the grant activity has helped to attract elders, our biggest resource; we go to them for help in getting things established.” Volunteer and Community Member, White Earth Land Recovery Project

**COMMENTARY:**

For many ICP grantees, Lannan Foundation's funding was the first or the most significant financial support they had ever received from a philanthropic organization. Many indigenous peoples value the practice of reciprocity and giving to others as a part of everyday life. Engaging in formal philanthropic relationships and activities is sometimes new and perplexing to Native communities. However, many Native groups are realizing that foundation funding helps to provide a base to leverage support from other funders. Lannan's support adds to the experience and financial base of indigenous non-profit organizations to attract additional funds from other foundations, though some organizations are just beginning to learn how to leverage foundation support.

***7. Is there anything that could have been done differently? Why? or Why not? How?***

**RESPONSE:**

“I think, at heart, we tried to do what we said we would do. I don't think that the vision is ours, it comes from people long gone who said that the Bison would return. Some of us who got caught up in it today never realized how great it is or what we were getting into. So we had to go through that learning matrix. I don't think there is one way to do it. I think it is just a combination of all of us learning to do different things—like when it comes to restoration of prairie grass. What you have to do on Winnebago is totally different than the plants and climate at Cheyenne River or in Montana. So you have to do what you can here.” Board Member, InterTribal Bison Cooperative

**COMMENTARY:**

For the first time in many generations, indigenous peoples are building their own institutions and seeking their own solutions. Most grantees admitted that making mistakes along the way was simply part of the learning process, and all felt they needed more time to explore the possibilities of project outcomes. Even when all activities do not go as planned, there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained during the project process. Many projects are breaking new ground in reviving traditional culture and applying traditional values and practices to contemporary life. This process takes added time and intuitive skills to navigate the balance of ancient knowledge and modern technology, while at the same time trying to include many community members in the process. Support for this initial stage of development is critically important. Benefits to the community may not become apparent for many years.

***8. Are there remaining challenges? If so, what are they? What's next?***

**RESPONSE:**

“Grassroots organizations are the backbone of Native communities, traditions, and Native cultures. It is the Native community-based action groups that have brought about much of the social change that has occurred in Indian Country today...One of the challenges is to be able to provide the advocacy or the liaison work with the greater philanthropic community and to take the issues that we have identified in the Native communities, whether they are environmental or sustainable communities issues, and to encourage other support for those types of activities.” Director, Seventh Generation Fund

**COMMENTARY:**

Funders and communities must continue to seek and build relationships and partnerships, which bring in additional funding for grassroots indigenous organizations and allow for funding long-term projects. Learning to listen and communicate with each other is vital to these relationships. Healing and rebuilding families and communities is a common goal with many paths leading to success. Many indigenous people carry many roles at one time in their community: they may be finishing their education, raising a family, taking care of elders, learning their language and participating in ceremonies and community events, as well as working or volunteering with an organization. The challenges of daily life are further impacted by the complexities of rural economics, transportation, health, and education. Many developing and growing communities and organizations are in need of office space, buildings, and computers. Developing human capacity within these communities is the key to

any success. Each small success encourages other adults and youth to become involved, take a class, look for a job, or buy a house. As some of these organizations continue to grow, they will be in need of more trained staff, office machines and materials, telephones, faxes, computers and internet access. Each organization has a long list of needs and goals. They are learning to compile their list of resources, tap into the community for partnering, and utilize the richness of their culture to operate with integrity in obtaining outside support for their vision.

***9. Can you tell us a story that reflects what happened during the period of this grant? (first in your own words and then in any other sort of medium you would like to share) What mattered?***

**RESPONSE:**

“Ever since we held our first gathering in Arctic Village in 1988, we have been inviting the local politicians to join us and to participate in and listen to the stories of the Gwich'in people. When one of our local politicians proposed an amendment to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development, he finally agreed to come and see us. He brought his staff and a couple of other local people with him to meet with us. A Gwich'in Steering Committee member and I let the community know that he was coming; we knocked on the doors of the elders and the youth, and let the entire village know about this meeting. The elders made caribou stew and brought tools that were made out of the bone and skins of the caribou. They wanted to share this way of life and let our guest know that they were not going to back down from fighting the development on our caribou calving grounds. At the site of the meeting, we had expected the politician to sit facing the people, so we could speak face to face with him. But he sat in the first row of the audience with his back to us. The elders began with a prayer and then went in front of him and told their stories and showed him the tools they had made. The younger ones got up and some of the little ones simply asked him to please not destroy the caribou. Everyone was sharing the same story of how the caribou was such an integral part of their lives.

When we had previously visited Washington, D.C. we were only given two to ten minutes to state our case. We therefore told our guest that he had ten minutes to state his case. During the day we had taken him on a tour of our village and really taken good care of him. At that moment he stood in front of us and said, ‘I have seen your community and realize how poor you are. You are a very poor people, living on welfare...and this oil drilling will offer you jobs and greater economic security. I understand you are concerned about the health of the caribou and we would take this into consideration. We will stop drilling for those three months when the caribou are calving, and we will create a committee to look after the caribou which your elders can sit on...’ I was too upset to say anything for a while. How dare he tell us that we were poor. We were richer in ways that he could never be. Our land and way of life is more valuable than money could ever be to us. We do not need to sit on a committee to monitor the health of our caribou; we do that full time all year round. He listened but he didn't hear.

Every time our people try to change things, we get knocked down. The other side wants us to change; they try to displace us, telling us that our way of life is not the right way of life. They do not understand that this is why we have the alcoholism rates that we do and people being

sent to jail. Our people belong where they are and they do not need to be changed. This is the way it should be. Don't try to change us or entice us with modern companies and technology. When we go to the city, we come back in a box. The politician was in a rush to leave so he didn't eat any of the food prepared or visit with any of our people. We gave him a plate to go.” Spokesperson and Community Member, Gwich'in Steering Committee

**COMMENTARY:**

Personal experience and first hand knowledge of the projects were shared by all those interviewed. In the stories shared, the reviewers heard the sounds of families and laughter. They heard about a deep connection to the earth, to animals, and to ancient tribal lifeways. They heard about the struggles, about racism, and about social and environmental issues. They heard that the buffalo have returned to the Indian people after 100 years. They heard that some indigenous languages will die and others will continue to be revived and spoken. They cried and laughed and were touched by many beautiful accomplishments and interactions. For oral-based cultures, stories told face to face convey much more than words. The culture and history of indigenous peoples are revealed in creation myths, trickster morality stories, sacred ceremonial stories, and tribal songs. It is believed that breath gives life to the words, creating an energy between teller, listener, and the universe.

***10. Do you have any questions for the Lannan Foundation Board or Staff?***

Grantees shared their recommendations, ideas, and questions with reviewers and the Lannan Foundation Board and staff. In their questions and recommendations grantees stressed repeatedly the importance of the following:

**Recognizing the importance of oral history:**

“The oral histories of Native peoples are stories of their relationship to the land. It is this history that allows us to understand where we have been and where we are going. Who knows the history of the land better, someone who lives on the land or someone who periodically studies the land? There is now a federal precedent for oral history and cultural information. It is now playing a greater role in our judicial system, at least in Hawai'i.” Oral History Researcher, Native Lands Institute / Mauna Kea Project

**Recognizing the unique characteristics of work being done in indigenous communities:**

“Many funders do not understand how the type of work we are doing fits into their particular area. It has been difficult to obtain funding even for the environmental work that we do. The indigenous views are different than how other people view things and it is difficult for us to explain those things. Our vision is broader and incorporates a lot of elements and issues that are not narrow enough for many funders. We have been fortunate that Lannan has been able to see and understand how all of this fits together. In order to really explain ourselves well, we have to go back to the fields.” Director, Traditional Native American Farmers Association

**Recognizing the importance of site visits:**

“Some foundations, if they have helped us out for two years, might come one morning and walk around and visit with us for a short while then leave. But we don't really sit down and talk about old issues, emerging issues and things like that. They come to the organization

with the idea ‘we are going to help you out’ and have very good intentions, but they don't learn a lot. They are very good at granting money, but they are not very good at seeing how that money can influence change over time—they are not always thinking about how communities change. This ability to foresee change is what I look for in a foundation, both as a grantee and as an advisor.” Grantee and Advisor to Lannan Foundation



Nemiah Elder, British Columbia

# Recommendations for Supporting Indigenous Communities

## *Community Voices*

During the course of conducting the foundation's review it was important to listen to the stories, concerns, and challenges of the participating grantees. By listening, reviewers learned more about what is working, what remains difficult, and what is needed for future grantmaking in indigenous communities. This was a key part of the review.

Reviewers first studied the organizational characteristics of those participating in the review. After visiting with 33 grantee organizations, reviewers came up with a set of organizational beliefs and principles, a set of difficulties shared by many of the participants, and a set of their recommendations for how to improve funding in communities serving Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

### ***Key common organizational beliefs and principles of Native-led (usually grassroots) organizations include:***

- Follow the seventh generation protocol
  - a) Look at the long-term results of projects. Indigenous peoples have a deep respect for the earth and take into consideration the long-term harm that may be inflicted upon the land and water
  - b) Look at things in a holistic, inter-relational way
- Projects produce spiritual and sustainable benefits for the community, not always economic advantage
- Indigenous communities need to be able to grow and develop their own institutions on their own terms
- Have the willingness to work through the difficult times
- Have a place-based relationship with community
- Projects are (usually) designed to be consensus-oriented and to benefit the whole community rather than to benefit a few individuals
- Capacity of the organization or the community must be developed before the project moves forward
- Support a ceremonial component to life
  - a) Ceremonies are reappearing in communities where the language and traditions are being re-established
  - b) Projects usually include a traditional or spiritual component which Native people understand about better than anyone else
- Cultivate a sense of humor and the ability to laugh through difficult times

- Government institutions and civic framework is always emerging and changing
- Communication is based on the oral tradition of Native peoples. This is much more than the vocalization of words. It is based on the presence of another (or others) and the sharing of stories face to face



Santa Clara Family, New Mexico

***Key difficulties for Native-led organizations and indigenous communities:***

- Lack of trained teachers and curriculum materials for language development
- Lack of organizational development training
- Insufficient project infrastructure—buildings, office space, technology
- Insufficient civic infrastructure—limited access to meeting rooms, hotels, airports, limited number of community-based institutions such as libraries and recreational facilities
- Lack of training in financial administration—grant budgeting and organizational budgeting
- Lack of Native technical assistance providers and consultants
- Lack of organizations funding Native language and traditional culture projects

***Key recommendations from grantees to funders:***

- Offer long-term funding for projects with multiple year commitments
- Allow grantees to do things on their own terms
- Be willing to listen and to learn from grantees
- Fund operational and organizational support
- Fund long-term project infrastructure such as buildings and office space
- Fund technical assistance which is chosen in collaboration with grantee
- Fund gatherings that allow grantees to come together and share their stories with one another
- Understand that many Native communities communicate through the oral tradition, and English is not always the native language of the organization's grant writer or report writer. Follow-up communication by telephone may be necessary
- Continue to fund grassroots organizations. This is where the work begins and how community leaders emerge
- Provide feedback and clear reporting expectations to grantees
- Make site visits in order to meet with program participants face to face, hear (and see) the whole story, and feel the impact of travel and place
- Be flexible in categorical funding—people cannot always put ideas and projects into categorical boxes

***Lannan Foundation Board, Advisors, and Staff***

In addition to evaluating its ICP program funding areas and grants, the foundation also wished to evaluate its own objectives in making grants to indigenous communities programs. As reviewers interviewed ICP committee members, advisors, and staff, a number of concerns and recommendations for funding in indigenous communities were presented. All of those interviewed emphasized the necessity for the foundation to continue to take risks and to sometimes step outside of the boundaries of regular grantmaking. While not all grantees have been as successful as others, both the foundation and grantees have learned from their shortfalls, as well as their successes. Native peoples and their projects have provided Lannan the opportunity to support substantial positive change with creative grantmaking.

***Key recommendations from Lannan Foundation Board, Advisory Committee, and Staff to other funders include:***

- Connect with individuals, groups and communities of indigenous people
- Build long-term relationships with grantees
- Do not expect short-term results. Many of the projects are life-long and will produce long-term results over a matter of time
- Look at the qualitative results of a project
- Support language revitalization and traditional culture projects
- Support the acquisition and recovery of Native lands
- Support culturally based economic development alternatives
- Fund organizational and development support, as well as operating costs and specific projects
- Support training workshops, travel funds for visiting and learning from other indigenous communities
- Fund technical assistance which is chosen in collaboration with grantee organization
- Work with board members to help them better understand the issues and strengths of indigenous communities
- Seek out advisors that know the issues and work in the field
- Support grassroots organizations or intermediaries that support grassroots people and organizations. (Change begins at the community level)
- Offer feedback to grantees
- Fund gatherings that focus on traditional culture and education, language revitalization, and environmental protection and advocacy
- Be flexible in the review of grant proposals and reports
- Support public relations efforts as a means by which grantees can gain further support and interact with one another
- Look for a wide range of participants who represent a diversity of community interests and experiences. The participation of community elders is particularly important to the integrity of a project
- Make site visits to organizations and talk to grantees face to face
- Be willing to take risks

Lannan Foundation Board Members, staff, advisors, and ICP grantees repeatedly underscored the importance of building relationships through site visits. These on-site meetings with organization and community members allow funders to examine the environment in which the project is taking place and to collect community impressions of how the project is evolving. Many Native people place a strong value upon face to face meetings with individuals or groups. These meetings allow for shared conversation to occur between the grantee and funding organization, helping to clarify ideas and break down barriers that the written word alone cannot break down. Reading a proposal does not allow a foundation representative to truly experience rural indigenous communities.

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**Lannan**

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## **Grant Guidelines**

### **FUNDING PROCEDURES**

Projects of potential interest are identified through a network of nominators with expertise in each program area. Nominators change each year and serve anonymously. Foundation staff will contact selected organizations with invitations to apply for funding. Letters of inquiry may also be sent to the foundation; however, please be aware that the foundation rarely makes grants for unsolicited requests. Letters of inquiry are accepted throughout the year and will be acknowledged upon receipt. Letters sent via facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted. Organizations are strongly encouraged to contact the foundation's program staff to discuss their ideas prior to submitting a letter.

## **Grant Programs**

### **ART PROGRAM**

The Art Program supports contemporary visual art. Areas of interest include funding artists for the creation of new work, scholarly publications that foster serious discussion of contemporary art, and organizations that bring new and sometimes experimental works of art to a wide audience. The criteria used to evaluate grants in the Art Program include: artistic merit, the significance and timeliness of the project, its potential impact on the participating artists(s), its educational benefit to the public, and how the organization would benefit by receiving a grant.

### **LITERARY PROGRAM**

The Literary Program supports the creation of exceptional English-language literature and seeks to develop a wider audience for contemporary poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. Areas of interest include funding organizations that support diverse writers through publication, presentation, and distribution. The criteria used to evaluate grants in the Literary Program include: literary merit, the project's benefit to the community, and the organization's stability and relationship to its community.

### **INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

The Indigenous Communities Program supports the resolve of Native people to renew their communities through their own institutions and traditions. Funding priority is given to rural community projects that are consistent with traditional values in the areas of environmental protection and advocacy, legal rights, language revitalization, education, and culture. The criteria used to evaluate grants in the Indigenous Communities Program include a wide range

of community representation on the applicant organization's board and staff, the organization's role within the context of the whole community, and the organization's stability. Grant awards are made to organizations that are Native-led and benefit a significant portion of the community.

### **TYPES OF SUPPORT**

The foundation recognizes that significant projects require time and a variety of resources to accomplish their goals. Therefore, it will consider multi-year requests for funding of project costs, operating costs, technical assistance, and collaborative activities that build organizational strength and community capacity.

Funds are not available for: documentary film or video projects; performing arts or theater; crafts or decorative arts; loans or grants to individuals intended directly or indirectly to support candidates for political office or to influence legislation.

### **LETTERS OF INQUIRY**

Letters of inquiry should include:

- The legal name used by the applicant organization exactly as recorded by the Internal Revenue Service
- A concise statement of the purpose of the request, its significance and strengths, and the results sought (not more than two pages)
- A budget for the project (if project funds are being applied for) and the current annual budget for the organization (including all other funding sources)
- A timeline for the implementation of the projects and for intended results.

Organizations whose letters of inquiry are of interest to the foundation will be invited to submit a formal proposal. Due to the large number of requests received by the foundation, funding is highly competitive. Only a few organizations will be asked to submit full proposals in each program area.

*Please visit Lannan Foundation's website ([www.lannan.org](http://www.lannan.org)) for more detailed information about the foundation's grant programs, public programs, and special projects.*

## **Grantee Organizations Funded by Lannan Foundation's ICP 1994-1998**

*Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival.* Visalia, California  
*Aha Punana Leo.* Hilo, Hawai'i  
*Akwe:kon Press/Native AMERICAS.* Ithaca, New York  
*Akwesasne Freedom School.* Rooseveltown, New York  
*American Indian College Fund.* Denver, Colorado  
*American Indian Language Development Institute.* Tucson, Arizona  
*American Indian Higher Education Consortium.* Alexandria, Virginia  
*American Indian Science and Engineering Society.* Albuquerque, New Mexico  
*Anishinaabe Nijiji.* Hayward, Wisconsin  
*Arapaho Language Lodge.* Ethete, Wyoming  
*Bay Mills Community College.* Brimley, Michigan  
*Blackfeet Community College.* Browning, Montana  
*Blackfeet Reservation Development Fund, Inc.* Browning, Montana  
*California Indian Basketweavers Association.* Nevada City, California  
*Catawba Cultural Preservation Project.* Rock Hill, South Carolina  
*Chevak Traditional Council.* Chevak, Alaska  
*Chickasaw Nation.* Chickasaw, Oklahoma  
*Columbia River Education Project.* The Dalles, Oregon  
*Comanche Language Preservation.* Lawton, Oklahoma  
*Instituto de Culturas Nativas de Baja, California.* Baja, California  
*Dakota Cultural Institute.* Lake Andes, South Dakota  
*Diné Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment.* (Diné CARE). Winslow, Arizona  
*Dineh Alliance.* Window Rock, Arizona  
*Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining.* Crownpoint, New Mexico  
*Edith Kanaka Ole Foundation.* Hilo, Hawai'i  
*First Environment Project.* Berkshire, New York  
*First Nations Development Institute.* Fredericksburg, Virginia  
*Fort Belknap Community College.* Harlem, Montana  
*Gar Creek Planning Committee.* Seminole, Oklahoma  
*Gwich'in Steering Committee.* Arctic Village, Alaska  
*Honor the Earth.* St. Paul, Minnesota  
*Hopi Foundation.* Hotevilla, Arizona  
*Hupa Valley Tribe.* Hoopa, California  
*Independent Traditional Seminole Nation.* Immokalee, Florida  
*Indian Law Resource Center.* Helena, Montana  
*Indigenous Environmental Network.* Bemidji, Minnesota  
*Indigenous Women's Network.* Rapid City, South Dakota  
*International Indian Treaty Council.* San Francisco, California  
*International Native Languages Institute.* Bismark, North Dakota  
*InterTribal Bison Cooperative.* Rapid City, South Dakota  
*InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council.* Ukiah, California  
*Jicarilla Apache Tribe.* Dulce, New Mexico  
*Juaneño Band of Mission Indians.* Santa Ana, California  
*Ka'ala Farm, Inc.* Wai'anae, Hawai'i

*Ke Kua'aina Hanauna Hou.* Kaunakakai, Hawai'i  
*Keepers of the Treasures.* Santa Fe, New Mexico  
*Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma.* McLoud, Oklahoma  
*Linguistic Institute for Native Americans.* Albuquerque, New Mexico  
*Little Big Horn College.* Crow Agency, Montana  
*Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance.* Old Town, Maine  
*Mattaponi Heritage Foundation.* West Point, Virginia  
*National Environmental Coalition of Native Americans.* Prague, Oklahoma  
*Native Action.* Lame Deer, Montana  
*Native American Program.* Reno, Nevada  
*Native California Network.* Sebastopol, California  
*Native Hawai'ian Advisory Council.* Honolulu, Hawai'i  
*Native Lands Institute.* Hilo, Hawai'i  
*Native Village of Gambell.* Gambell, Alaska  
*NativeSUN Hopi Solar Electric Enterprise.* Kykotsmovi, Arizona  
*Nez Perce Young Horsemen.* Lapwai, Idaho  
*Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association.* Olympia, Washington  
*Oak Lake Writer's Society.* Rapid City, South Dakota  
*Oglala Lakota College.* Kyle, South Dakota  
*Ohngo Gaudadeh Devia.* Tooele, Utah  
*Oklahoma State University/Native Language Immersion Conference.* Stillwater, Oklahoma  
*Petroglyph Monument Protection Coalition.* Albuquerque, New Mexico  
*Picuris Pueblo.* Peñasco, New Mexico  
*Piegan Institute.* Browning, Montana  
*Poarch Band of Creek Indians.* Atmore, Alabama  
*Poo-Ha-Bah Healing Center.* Tecopa, California  
*Pte Hca Ka.* Gettysburg, South Dakota  
*Pueblo of Cochiti.* Cochiti, New Mexico  
*Pueblo of Zuni.* Zuni, New Mexico  
*Salish Kootenai College.* Pablo, Montana  
*San Juan Agricultural Cooperative.* San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico  
*San Xavier Cooperative Association.* Tucson, Arizona  
*Santa Clara Pueblo.* Santa Clara, New Mexico  
*Save Ward Valley.* Needles, California  
*Seventh Generation Fund.* Arcata, California  
*Sinte Gleska University.* Rosebud, South Dakota  
*Slim Buttes Agricultural Development Project.* Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota  
*Sokaogon Chippewa Community.* Crandon, Wisconsin  
*Stone Child College.* Box Elder, Montana  
*Thakiwa Traditional Agriculture Project.* Stroud, Oklahoma  
*Teton Sioux National Treaty Council.* Pine Ridge, South Dakota  
*Tohono O'odham Basketweavers Association.* Sells, Arizona  
*United Rappahannock Tribe.* Indian Neck, Virginia  
*Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay.* Gardnerville, Nevada  
*Western Shoshone Defense Project.* Crescent Valley, Nevada  
*White Earth Land Recovery Project.* Ponsford, Minnesota  
*Ya Ne Dah Ah School.* Chickaloon, Alaska

*Yankton Dacotah Women's Society.* Lake Andes, South Dakota  
*Yoemem Tekia Foundation.* Tucson, Arizona  
*Yurok Tribe of the Yurok Reservation.* Eureka, California  
*Zuni Conservation Project.* Zuni, New Mexico  
*Zuni Organic Farmers Cooperative.* Zuni, New Mexico  
*Traditional Native American Farmers Association.* Santa Fe, New Mexico

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