



Kauffman  
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I N C O R P O R A T E D

Northwest Area Foundation

# Tribal Ventures: Telling the Collective Story

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**Final Report**

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## Executive Summary

The Northwest Area Foundation (NWAf) launched the Tribal Ventures program in 2004 as a bold, new effort to help tribal communities reduce poverty. Committed to support this effort for a 10-year period, the NWAf established strong partnerships with three tribes: the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa; the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe; and the Lummi Nation. An 18- to 24-month planning period provided extensive community engagement and strategy development, followed by 10-year funding for the implementation of each plan.

NWAf contracted with Kauffman and Associates, Inc., (KAI) to use an indigenous evaluation framework to tell the story of the Tribal Ventures program, from the words and experiences of those involved at the community level. The appendix section includes an impressive list of accomplishments for the three tribes involved. These accomplishments included establishing locally controlled nonprofit organizations to implement their poverty reduction plans and convene stakeholders. Each tribe established a local community development financial institution (CDFI) to provide lending, supported local entrepreneurial opportunities, forged new partnerships within their local systems, and brought in new partners.

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa increased their community members' financial literacy, created a downtown business corridor, used federal tax credits for low-income housing, invested in community infrastructure, and opened a full-service bank. The quality of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa 10-year plan and the commitment of its governance to pursue this plan, was identified as a factor to the tribe successfully competing for a "Promise Zone" designation under the Obama Administration in 2016.

Cheyenne River Sioux invested in community education, supported local business ventures, and created a youth individual development account program. This program seeks to increase the financial literacy of youth, create internships, and establish savings accounts for higher education. They also organized a Native Chamber of Commerce, created matching grants for local business creation, and supported workforce programs.

Lummi Nation developed its Te'Ti'Sen Center to support local small businesses by offering business incubator space and commercial retail space. This effort attracted additional support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Paul Allen Family Foundation, the state of Washington, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In addition to these many local accomplishments, personal community interviews identified major cross-cutting impacts. Lasting impacts of the Tribal Ventures effort include:

- **Healing and awakening change:** Asking each tribal community to define *poverty* and *prosperity* for themselves opened deep historical wounds and unleashed a powerful resolve, cultural resilience, and commitment to healing and change.

- **Leadership development:** The leaders who emerged in various Tribal Ventures roles continue to serve their communities or have been recruited to other significant leadership roles.
- **Community capacity building:** Knowledge, skills, and practices important for community prosperity and wellness have been ingrained in key community leaders and organizations and institutionalized locally. The communities have improved their capacities for data reporting and monitoring, housing development, financial literacy, and economic opportunity development.
- **Institutional change:** New organizations created in the three communities continue to operate, and they have become a part of the community and tribal setting. These organizations work across silos.
- **Access to new opportunities:** Tribal Ventures resources and knowledge has placed tribes at the table with other potential funders and policymakers and expanded their economic opportunities.
- **Entrepreneurial opportunities in tribal communities:** Many of the venues for individual entrepreneurs in these communities have taken root and continue to offer support to individually owned businesses.

The Tribal Ventures partners' experiences provide valuable lessons for the NAAF and any philanthropic organization looking to tackle significant, long-term challenges in tribal communities. The voices of the three communities speak of hope, respect, understanding, and trust. This report summarizes the lessons learned identified by these communities, which are:

- understand and honor the tribal context,
- acknowledge and adjust for cultural disconnects,
- engage the power of the community voice and community-driven plans,
- commit to the journey,
- support innovative governance approaches,
- enlist dynamic local champions,
- use strategy-specific and community-specific technical assistance, and
- include community-based indigenous engagement and evaluation.

Tribal Ventures was a different type of initiative for the foundation and for the tribal communities. It produced many positive impacts locally and opened the door to new partnerships and opportunities for each tribal community. Most importantly, it provided a framework for foundations willing to adjust to the unique historical and cultural realities of tribal communities that want to make positive contributions that can be sustained over time.

## Introduction to Tribal Ventures

NWAF launched the Tribal Ventures program in 2004 as part of a bold, new approach to help communities reduce poverty. Key features of the program are listed here.<sup>1</sup>

- NWAF worked in partnership with three Native American communities to help them identify and address the root causes of poverty in their communities.
- The Tribal Ventures program included an initial 18- to 24- month planning period that resulted in the development of community-driven plans for reducing poverty. While each plan was unique, each identified strategies that built on existing community assets and had the potential to contribute to transformative change.
- NWAF made significant, long-term investments to support these communities in accomplishing their goals. Each Tribal Ventures site received \$6 million to \$10 million over 10 years (from 2006 through 2016).
- In each community, the tribal council governed the overall Tribal Ventures effort and set up an independent nonprofit entity to lead its implementation. Across the three communities, some of the key partners included: tribal government departments, tribal colleges, community development financial institutions (CDFIs), other nonprofits, community-based groups, local businesses, and community members.

The three Native American communities were:

- **Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa**, located in Belcourt, ND, is near the Canadian border, where 12,000 tribal members (32,000 total membership) reside on or near the reservation;
- **Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe**, which spans 2.8 million acres, contains 18 communities in central South Dakota, and has 16,000 tribal members; and
- **Lummi Nation**, which is located on a peninsula across the bay from Bellingham, WA, near the Canadian border and has a population of 9,400.

## Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation was to tell the collective story about the difference Tribal Ventures has made across the three tribal communities and share lessons learned. This

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<sup>1</sup> Northwest Area Foundation. (2011, January). *Gaining Perspective: Lessons Learned from One Foundation's Exploratory Decade*, p. 5–9.  
[http://www.nwaf.org/content/uploads/oldsite/FileCabinet/DocumentCatalogFiles/Other/GainingPerspective\\_Full\\_1-14.pdf](http://www.nwaf.org/content/uploads/oldsite/FileCabinet/DocumentCatalogFiles/Other/GainingPerspective_Full_1-14.pdf)

evaluation is told from the perspectives of the participating communities to honor and lift up their voices, experiences, and lessons learned under this initiative.

## Methods

KAI grounds its work in the Indigenous Evaluation Framework, which is a robust, methodological approach rooted in Indigenous values, knowledge, and histories (See Appendix A. Indigenous Evaluation Framework for in-depth overview). It is the lens through which KAI evaluated NWAf's Tribal Ventures partners. The framework begins with a deep understanding of the historic context and interrelationships existing in each community, and between communities and the foundation. Our process included the following:

- **Environmental scan:** KAI began its systematic analysis by conducting a literature review on alleviating poverty. Several documents from the First Nations Development Institute provided context on the importance of asset building. *Ending Child Poverty Now*, by the Children's Defense Fund, considered policy options, such as job programs and training, childcare, and housing. The Native Nations Institute and the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development's paper, *Seizing the Future: Why Some Native Nations Do and Others Don't*, shared possibilities that stem from proactive decisions.
- **Document review:** KAI reviewed the strategic plans and final reports from the three partners and interviewed key informants. Additionally, KAI read the NWAf assessment report. KAI coded the initial strategic plans, final reports, and key informant interviews, identifying themes and findings in each community and across all three tribes. KAI examined outcomes and program results, impacts, and lessons learned. KAI used the final reports to call out specific examples of evaluation evidence from each community, using the narratives to tell individual stories, experiences, and successes. KAI shared the draft summary analysis with key representatives in December.
- **Facilitated framework with key representatives:** On December 13, 2016, KAI met with NWAf program staff and key leadership from Tribal Ventures partners to identify common themes across communities and to more fully understand the tribal experiences and lessons learned. The goal was to identify how to tell the collective story of the Tribal Ventures partners' 10-year journey.
- **Qualitative interviews and data gathering:** Our team worked to fill in the gaps of this collective story by conducting qualitative interviews with key leaders or community members from the three communities. These were conducted over the telephone, recorded, transcribed, and coded to identify major themes and key statements.
- **Validation:** Our team shared the draft findings of major impacts and lessons learned with those interviewed and NWAf staff prior to presenting it to the foundation in their final form to allow time for any corrections or additions. Our team met with NWAf on July 17, 2017. We sent a draft final report to those interviewed on August 4, 2017.

## Tribal Ventures Cross-Cutting Impacts

Several major themes emerged across the documents and personal interviews. Inquiries about lasting impacts of the Tribal Ventures effort nested in these six categories:

- **Healing and awakening change:** Asking each tribal community to define *poverty* and *prosperity* for themselves opened deep historical wounds and unleashed powerful resolve, cultural resilience, and commitment to healing and change.
- **Leadership development:** The leaders who emerged in various Tribal Ventures roles continue to serve their communities or have been recruited to other significant leadership roles.
- **Community capacity building:** Knowledge, skills, and practices important for community prosperity and wellness have been ingrained in key community leaders and organizations, and institutionalized locally. These include data reporting and monitoring, housing development, financial literacy, and economic opportunity development.
- **Institutional change:** New organizations created in each of the three communities continue to operate and have become a part of the community and tribal setting. These organizations work across silos.
- **Access to new opportunities:** Having Tribal Ventures resources and knowledge placed tribes at the table with other potential funders and policymakers and expanded opportunities.
- **Entrepreneurial opportunities in tribal communities:** Many of the venues for individual entrepreneurs in these communities have taken root and continue to offer support to individually owned businesses.

For a richer description of each of these six areas of impact, we have provided specific examples from each of the three tribes, using their voices and words to tell their collective story.

### Healing and Awakening Change

The NWAFF theory around poverty reduction was incongruous with the cultures, language, and teachings in each of the three tribes. There was no word for *poverty* in their Native languages. The foundation asked each tribal community to define *poverty* and *prosperity* for themselves. These opened discussions about deep historical wounds, but also unleashed powerful resolve, cultural resilience, and a shared commitment to healing and change.

## Voices of the People

“One thing they did really well for the first couple of years ... they had people coming in to do ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). They had healing circles. They just had people taking a look at themselves. And that was huge. Funding ran out for that, and now we have one person who was also a part of Ventures right from the beginning, and she still does healing circles, which impacts on such a wonderful level.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“The people are a water people, and they kept talking about all of us being in the canoe together. That’s such a foundation for all the people that were in that room. We were all in that same canoe, and we were going to get through this. And, you know, the wonderful thing about it—this moving away from that pain that we’ve done—we’ve turned around some of the things that we were focusing on.”  
– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“One of the people said that you have rays of light that shine up, like, you know, —those spotlights, they’re lights that stream up to the sky, in the blackness, and that’s the only thing that was giving them hope. Some of the people were healing themselves. Because it was very spiritual.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

## Leadership Development

Strong, focused leadership was required to advance the many initiatives over the 10-year plan. Even when there was turnover, the individuals who served in Tribal Ventures continued to serve their communities in other capacities by thinking and approaching the work differently and being able to influence other organizations and parts of the community. This effort sparked a broader movement among the local community members to step into other leadership functions locally and regionally. The leaders who emerged in various roles continue to serve their communities, or they have been recruited to other significant leadership roles.

## Voices of the People

“That strong leadership, I think, created the chance to really see [that] the resources that were offered were truly resources. They weren’t people who were doing things for us ... we weren’t relying on them to do it for us.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“Some of the local Tribal Ventures staff ended up as tribal economic experts and working with other agencies, including the Wind Farm Business Planning and the Bush Foundation.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

“[The] first community Tribal Ventures director was recruited, the second director was hired at the college, and the third director was elected as tribal chairman. Many have been recruited for leadership training with the Bush Foundation. The positive impact from this is the change in leadership capacity.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

## Community Capacity Building

Knowledge, skills, and practices important for community prosperity and wellness have been ingrained in key community leaders and organizations, and institutionalized locally. These include data reporting and monitoring, housing development, financial literacy, and economic opportunity development. The Cheyenne River Voices Research project gathered baseline data to make educated decisions about the community and economic development strategies. Lummi Nation's data gathering capacity resulted in identifying local artists, which became a significant community asset they could build upon to support their culture and economic development work. Through training, mentoring, workshops, internships, and evaluation, the communities expanded their capacity at the individual, organizational, and leadership levels. One partner said this growth has contributed to relearning the "mindset of empowerment." The communities emerged from the 10-year Tribal Ventures process stronger than when they started it. Individuals have additional skills, believe more strongly in themselves, and see brighter futures for themselves and their communities. Tribal governments, tribal organizations, and governmental and organizational staff have more skills and have increased their capacity across a range of sectors and programs.

### Voices of the People

"The many people who showed up at community meetings to offer input on poverty reduction—some of these people became board members or joined committees and got engaged in local government and social entrepreneurship." – *NWAF stakeholder*

"[The] tribe was able to construct a community center for gatherings and cultural events. A GED program grew from this and over 300 people earned their GEDs." – *NWAF stakeholder*

"At one point, just ... how many years ago—14, 13 years ago—you couldn't find Lummi art anywhere. And yet, when we did our survey, we found out that there were, like, 150 to 180 artists in our community." – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

"Our agency, Tribal Nations Research Group (TNRG) was the entity that really helped to move this effort forward. We did not have a functioning MIS system before, and TNRG has taken up the role for Turtle Mountain Chippewa, as a result of Pathways to Prosperity evaluation requirements. We now have a real MIS and data analysis function at Turtle Mountain." – *Turtle Mountain stakeholder*

## Institutional Change

New organizations, created locally in each of the three communities, continue to be a part of the community and tribal setting. The nonprofit organizations were able to incubate and attract funding for community projects. The Native CDFIs helped build a private sector in reservations communities. Other community cooperative associations were also created, for example, with

Lummi Nation artists and fisherman. Each tribal partner created organizations to implement the Tribal Ventures plan. In all cases, the new institutions and Native nonprofit organizations had some level of autonomy, resources, and staff capacity to assist in the implementation of the plans and to support the community. The organizations engaged in and facilitated joint work within their tribes around the Ventures plans and assisted individual tribal programs in broader community work. These new institutions used a collaborative model that brought people together across silos and organizational divides to tackle common problems.

### Voices of the People

“The lasting impact has been some time to build trust amongst organizations, the tribe itself with its people, the tribe itself with other nonprofits and entities ... not that nobody ever works together and there’s no trust, but that is a constant beast that raises its head every day.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“I felt like a lasting impact of the Tribal Ventures work ... consistently brought people to the table who did not inherently trust or want to work together. Even if they were still within the same lane of good, important work. Because of years and years and years and 50, 75 years of federal funding and categorical funding. And then, all the threats on a daily basis, including today—people have become territorial in the funding arena, if you will, and lots of other ways, as well.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“So, this team ... worked through, knowing that front-door vision had to be held in its highest regard, with those values, to go forward, along with the technical assistance and that sort of thing. So, to put that now at its crossroads going forward, is now to carry on sustainability with still a fledgling, incubating organization on its own. It’s still working to build its own internal infrastructure, build its own capacity to do something that’s never been done in this kind of realm before, with the cultural aspects, and then trying to maintain that trust within the values and the vision identified in Ventures.”  
– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“What happens—and this is demonstrable—is that they are stuck with a BIA tribal charter that basically has the entire government up for election every 2 years. They keep switching. One group comes in every 2 years, and they vote out the other group. They set off in another direction, and the jobs at the casino and the jobs and all the tribal enterprises switch hands a little bit, depending who is in power. So, you never get the continuity and institutional memory that you need to move forward.”  
– *NWAF stakeholder*

## Access to New Opportunities

Access to Tribal Ventures resources and knowledge, placed tribes at the table with other potential funders and policymakers and expanded opportunities. Tribal Ventures leaders at the local level recruited new resources from private foundations, federal initiatives, and local

government. Lummi Nation, for example, leveraged over \$10 million from other funding sources, including the Gates Foundation and the Paul G. Allen Foundation. Turtle Mountain accessed new opportunities by reaching out to Promise Zone, who initially felt the tribe would not be competitive. After reviewing the Tribal Ventures plan and understanding the comprehensiveness of their local plan, they decided Turtle Mountain was more competitive and resulted in a Promise Zone designation.

The partnerships each tribal community entered provided useful experiences and examples for future opportunities. Lummi Nation may seek increased partnership with the State of Washington Sea Grant as they consider economic opportunities for Lummi fisheries.<sup>2</sup> Cheyenne River noted that partnerships occur at different levels, and that the tribal role may entail only communicating with or coordinating partners. They understand that establishing roles and expectations early on and having steps in place to evaluate formal agreements and informal working practices is critical to successful partnerships.<sup>3</sup> Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa wants to expand its arts and crafts marketing into Minneapolis, MN, other areas in the Midwest, and other parts of North Dakota.<sup>4</sup>

### Voices of the People

“I don’t think the foundation realized how successful the investment had been in certain areas. There were areas where they had made a rather modest investment that really had made a difference. The land use plan tries to concentrate housing near jobs and near shopping. Five years later, they have four different housing projects within walking distance of the town center. You have someone who has learned how to use low-income housing tax credits, has two more projects in the pipeline, and a financial investor willing to do more.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

## Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Tribal Communities

Support for individual entrepreneurs in these communities has taken root and continues to offer opportunities for individually owned businesses. All three Tribal Ventures programs developed some form of small business development model. Each model provided technical and financial resources to encourage local entrepreneurship and small business development. These assets supported new tribal enterprises and provided a space for prospective entrepreneurs to develop business skills. Lummi Nation created a formal incubator and started a CDFI. Turtle Mountain started a CDFI. Cheyenne River partnered with an existing Native CDFI and provided business grants to local businesses. As a sustaining impact, individual entrepreneurs now have an environment where they are welcomed and valued in their communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Lummi Ventures Staff. (2016). *Lummi Ventures Final Report*, p. 21 & 39.

<sup>3</sup> Akers, A. & Briggs, D.E. (2016). *Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures 10-year Report (2006–2016)*, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> Davis, T. (2016). *Pathways to Prosperity Tribal Ventures Final Evaluation*, p. 32.

For example, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe offered application assistance for prospective applicants to their Community Development Partnership Fund. Lummi Nation partnered with Northwest Indian College's Cooperative Extension to provide monthly financial literacy training through Building Native Communities Financial Skills for Families workshops. The Lummi people know they can be successful. They share their success stories and are willing to train others to develop new skills.<sup>5</sup> The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa's revolving loan fund and community bank provided significant assets to local economic development efforts.<sup>6</sup> Community members feel empowered and independent. This feeling impacted how individuals in the community approached opportunities and change.

### Voices of the People

"None of the people involved realized what a miracle that they'd accomplished in that one area, and that wasn't the only area. They'd done some good things in tourism. They'd done some good things in earned-income tax credit outreach. They brought two banks into the community where there had been no banks in the community at all. Their CDFI had funded six new businesses. There were two or three restaurants that hadn't been [there] before. There were all these signs of hope." – *NWAF stakeholder*

## Lessons Learned

The Tribal Ventures partner's experiences highlighted throughout this report provide insight into their lessons learned. Their voices further illuminate details from the three communities' 10-year journeys. The following lessons learned emerged across their reports and personal interviews:

- understand and honor the tribal context,
- acknowledge and adjust for cultural disconnects,
- engage the power of the community voice and community-driven plans,
- commit to the journey,
- support innovative governance approaches,
- enlist dynamic local champions,
- use strategy-specific and community-specific technical assistance, and
- include community-based indigenous engagement and evaluation.

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<sup>5</sup> Lummi Ventures Staff. (2016). *Lummi Ventures Final Report*, p.33.

<sup>6</sup> Davis, T. (2016). *Pathways to Prosperity Tribal Ventures Final Evaluation*, p. 124

The following sections more richly describe each lesson learned through specific examples from the three tribes, using their voices and words to tell their collective story.

## Understand and Honor Tribal Context

The three Tribal Ventures partners' indigenous cultures and values were fundamental to the programs' success. Their cultures and values inform each tribe's unique context, which helps explain where the lessons learned emerged. The four components of tribal context are: (1) people of place, history, and culture; (2) sovereignty; (3) historical and intergenerational trauma; and (4) readiness.

### People of Place, History, and Culture

The Tribal Ventures partners are grounded in their own unique histories and core cultural values. Each partner community comprises people of a place, including all the legends, songs, and histories that accompany them. To be successful, the Tribal Ventures work had to recognize the gifts of these communities' cultures, sense of community, beliefs, and sovereign existence. There is a profound sense of relationship and connectedness within each of these tribal communities. All of creation possesses spirit or energy and is connected to this work.

Honoring the Indigenous knowledge within each community was a key element for success of the Tribal Ventures partners. Knowledge can be traditional, empirical, or revealed through observations and interpreted experiences. Knowledge is derived from individual and communal experiences. As shared by one of the partners, "I misrepresent if I speak from what I did not experience. We honor the unspoken logic in our stories. We talk to tell our stories, [we] talk to connect—family, elders—to engage." The three Tribal Ventures partners honored these stories, histories, and traditions to better engage their communities and lift up their work.

Language is part of ceremony and cultural traditions. Poverty reduction entailed facing the tribes' histories and honoring their cultures and experiences. It required the time to truly engage in the discussion of poverty. What does poverty really mean? None of the tribes had an Indigenous word for poverty. Exploring what this word means from a tribal or cultural perspective opened the door to a broader understanding and more meaningful community support for the work that followed.

### Voices of the People

*"I'm from Lummi Nation and actually an enrolled Lummi tribal member here. And my Indian name's Klalute ... I have a close relationality and relationship with the people here, and I probably ... I've lived around Whatcom County pretty much my whole life. I've known and been raised with the Lummi community since I was a little baby, and I just ... I guess that's my connection, and you know, one of the reasons why I do the work." – Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“The tribal college was the capital, the crown jewel of the reservation. The population was getting more and more educated ... a pretty well-educated population with a lot of imagination. People are not short of ideas. And they don’t want to move away because they live on the most beautiful landscape. And they’re very tied to their home and their traditions.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

## Historical and Intergenerational Trauma

The question of how each community defined poverty provided the opportunity to explore unique cultural responses to the challenges they faced. Since there was no word in the Indigenous language of each community for poverty, the partners worked with communities to identify the best definition, as listed here.

- **Lummi Nation** defined poverty within their culture as “when one, some, or all Lummi values are missing that make a fully functional individual, family, or community.”
- **Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe** defined poverty as, “decades of poverty conditions have adversely affected all areas of Lakota life: culture, economics, social, mental, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. Poverty is influenced by cultural values, reservation economics, and lack of opportunities that have resulted in multiple generations living in poverty with no vision for a better future.”
- **Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa** defined poverty as being created over a difficult period of their history, and that the conditions that led to that poverty were fought against by early tribal leaders who tried to protect the legacy of their people. Tribal efforts are persistent and oftentimes creative, but they have, at best, alleviated conditions, rather than eliminated the negative aspects of poverty.

Poverty reduction, economic development, and community engagement through Tribal Ventures exist in a uniquely Indigenous context. They are immersed in and embody Native cultures and histories.

### Voices of the People

“When Karl [the NWAF president at the beginning of the Tribal Ventures journey] came out, he was very, very clear that the federal definition of poverty did not apply, and that was why we had the toughest time with our community—getting them to define poverty. The community dug deep, and everything that they said was recorded and given back to them with the privacy/confidentiality piece. No names attached. And they hammered it out. I think it was ... maybe even a year into it, before we finally nailed it down. And, when they did, the whole meeting room broke down and cried. So, that’s why we ended up in that conundrum, because now we’re not talking money and dollars and cents, because it was impacting families. It was impacting language, culture.”

– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“When the Ventures plan was created, I understand there was over 1,500 participants that opened themselves up, and it opened deep, deep-seated wounds. And it was like Pandora’s box, is the way our board chair put it. And I couldn’t agree more with that. So, when you open up Pandora’s box, there’s many centuries of trauma, broken trust, fear, hurt, all these pains that come out. And just from what I understand listening to people that were there, present, during the time when the Ventures Plan was being created, a lot of those feelings came up with our people from the young to the old.”

– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“How do we address poverty? So, there are centuries and centuries and centuries of hurt, on many different levels—not just boarding schools, but you also talked about the fishing wars in our tribal community, the racism that was internally and externally with our communities, and how the people wanted to address that. You think about when Pandora’s box, you open that, and then, as the Ventures Plan is ending, our people are thinking and feeling ... and I know I am for sure thinking, ‘Now what? Now what do we do with all these wounds that are open?’ I mean, how are we going to continue forward addressing hundreds of years of trauma? We know that we can’t address all areas and reverse everything within 10 years. That was a good start. But what’s next?”

– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

## **Sovereignty**

Sovereignty generally refers to the power to self-govern as a state or nation. It is important to understand the sovereign nature of the three tribal governments, which predates the long history of nation-to-nation relationships between federally recognized tribes and the United States. Tribal sovereignty has been ratified in treaties, federal laws, and the U.S. Constitution.

The three tribal partners discussed sovereignty of self, as the ability to self-determine actions and beliefs. Sovereignty, in this context, relates to individuals and culture. Tribal Ventures partners shared that there is also sovereignty of the mind at an individual level. This is important to consider for communities dealing with historical trauma, oppression, lateral violence, and learned dependencies over generations. Understanding sovereignty within this cultural context is an essential tool for recovery from generational traumas and finding the footing needed to prosper. As one Tribal Ventures partner noted, “We reclaim our sovereignty by telling our story. It is an act of sovereignty.”

Each of the three Tribal Ventures partners began with a formal agreement between the NWAFF and the sovereign government of each tribe. In an act of self-governance, each tribe designed its unique approach for reducing poverty and promoting prosperity over the 10-year period of support, and they designated the leadership, structure, and approach to carry their Tribal Ventures vision forward. Operating as a self-governing entity, without interference or pressures from outside power, is a struggle for any sovereign government. The three tribes studied, considered, and made informed decisions before deciding to move forward with the NWAFF opportunity.

As sovereign tribal governments, opportunities existed to provide financial incentives for priority activities, to house and incubate economic enterprises, to launch new programs to reduce barriers, and to change tribal law and governance functions (such as public utilities) to better support economic growth. The three tribal governments also have the authority to break down silos within their own bureaucracies, which is a powerful tool for creating change, building momentum, and setting the course.

The Indigenous cultures and values of each of the three Tribal Ventures partners were fundamental for the success of the programs. Opportunities and strategies for prosperity growth that matched cultural values of the three tribes were identified during this review.

### Voices of the People

*“One community was upfront and said, ‘We don’t need your money if you are going to tell us what to do.’ Karl Stauber supported allowing the tribes to do what they wanted to do.” – NWAf stakeholder*

### Readiness

The readiness of each community to engage in the complex planning and stakeholder engagement required to address multiple pathways toward reducing poverty and increasing prosperity must be considered. As described earlier, philanthropic initiatives that understand the context, history, and relational dynamics of the tribal community, and take the time needed for trust building, capacity building, and allowing the impacts of historical trauma to be considered, will better match initiatives to local readiness. Perhaps the most critical piece of each project was the intentional engagement, co-creation, and empowerment of the community to be part of the development of the broader community plans that guided the 10-year efforts. Equally important was the communities’ adherence to the plan and the stability it created for each Ventures organization in carrying out their plans. The only chance at true poverty reduction comes from recognizing tribal cultural values and incorporating them into the plan. All three communities grounded their efforts in who they are as people, calling out the importance of respect, humility, and inclusion. A Lummi Nation stakeholder stated, “Poverty and prosperity are not limited to traditional economic considerations... instead, the answer is found in promoting confidence and self-reliance among those struggling with economic hardship. Poverty alleviation is a system-wide effort across all segments of a community that touches all aspects of life.”

Developing and maintaining successful partnerships is a valuable tool for tribes as they continue to strive towards economic independence. The successful partnerships developed during the Tribal Ventures program will help Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, Lummi Nation, and Cheyenne River Sioux continue their community and economic development and their journey to wellbeing.

## Voices of the People

“They identified racism as a huge issue. And it wasn’t so much ... I mean, racism is alive and well out there, but our biggest downfall was our own internalized oppression.”

– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“The other is the readiness, the community readiness. When you have the large land base that we have, you have huge diversity just from a community perspective. Where you live geographically in the reservation, there’s biases and there’s prejudices. Even with all of that, you really do have to look at the community readiness, if they’re organized enough to be able to engage. There were some communities that were so fractionated, and it was so difficult to try to gather them in a good way. At times, it was so frustrating because it wouldn’t come together. No matter how much you wanted it, the readiness wasn’t there.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“I think that it’s important that we be mindful of that as we go forward with any project, is being able to plan for that ... readiness at a lower level or a smaller level. From the big tribe reservation, and then you start breaking it down. The community readiness really tells you a lot about even the readiness of individuals and families. You can have great success on a part of your reservation, and then, adjacent to that, you would have minimal success. I think it really boils down to how much more work needs to be done to work on that readiness and address the preparation for getting the community to take ownership and to want change.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Acknowledge and Adjust for Cultural Disconnects

The theory of poverty reduction that was proposed by the NAAF, to lift up the bottom quartile of the population, presented profound self-examination within each tribal community. What is “poverty” to our tribe? Who is “poor”? What are the root causes and solutions? A cultural disconnect around the notions of poverty, loss, change, and relationships, between the foundation and the communities required attention.

- **Defining poverty:** There is no word that translates to poverty in the Native languages. Close comparisons included someone without relatives. Allowing communities to define for themselves what poverty means, was a pivotal point in this relationship.
- **Loss:** Each tribe had its own historical trauma and cultural loss stories that emerged as they worked to define poverty and prosperity. With the opportunities that were being presented, taking the time to allow many voices from the community share these stories was important to reconcile those hurts.
- **Change:** Overcoming a sense of hopelessness is the first step toward change. Engaging the entire community in this conversation about change and prosperity created a foundation of supporters. The communities continue to discuss the extent of change possible in 10 years.

- **Relationships:** Moving from a transactional relationship to a relational way of dealing with communities was important, as the foundation became a partner, and not only a funder in this process.

### Voices of the People

“One of the things we still encounter, and we just did in one of our recent meetings, was this conversation about the bottom 25th quartile. And that led to a real conundrum when we started talking about what poverty meant to the Lummi people ... when one, some, or all of Lummi’s values are missing. So, that wasn’t just those people living under street bridges or in the bushes along parks and stuff. It was from that level, from your little babies all the way up to your elders, tribal council, program people, everybody. Because now we are talking about things aside from money, because we didn’t know how to deal with what we were up against in terms of what was the root cause of poverty. There’s a level of brokenness that people don’t even know that they have. And it still shows. It’s cropped its ugly head at every turn.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“I was in a meeting once, [and] this woman named Nola was in the meeting with us, and she wanted to talk about what the community could look like in the future, and poverty, and all these things. She was in the conversation with us all day, and then she was like, ‘I have to go.’ I’m like, ‘Oh, I’m sorry.’ And she’s like, ‘No, I have to go because my electricity got turned off, and I gotta go gather up some money so I can get ... it’s really hot out today and my babies are not going to be able to stay cool if I don’t get the electricity turned back on.’ It’s just ... she was working, and she got her electricity turned off, you know?” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“I think this is part of lessons learned, but ... I don’t think that [the foundation] had a sense of the level of poverty in Indian Country. As much as they had Native people working there and that, but the reservation and reservation poverty and ... most people aren’t aware of the level that’s there and that [those are] our relatives, that’s who we’re talking about here.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“If you could carry it out, you could make a real difference, but where do you focus? Where do you put your money? When folks realized, they were on the hook to deliver across this broad array of strategies (the strategy was not dictated by the foundation), you had to have a strategy in each one of those areas. You couldn’t focus as sharply as you needed to. They also had these expectations about matching resources and how much capital was brought into the reservation ... All of these expectations were wildly out of keeping with what it turned out you could actually accomplish.”  
– *NWAF stakeholder*

## Engage the Power of Community Voices and Community-Driven Plans

Promoting the practice of community stakeholder engagement throughout the project benefited the Tribal Ventures leadership, created an opportunity for new leaders to emerge, brought advocates and supporter to the table, and helped sustain momentum.

- **Stakeholder engagement:** The three tribal partners expressed incredible gratitude to their local communities, those who showed up, those who took leadership roles, and those who became its champions for change.
- **Power of process:** By changing the perspectives and practices of local champions, they have institutionalized change and normalized the values around change, including personal and community success stories. Their approaches sought systemic transformation, cutting across economic sectors, yet tackling governance and social and cultural revitalization to sustain this change longer term.
- **Community ownership and voice:** Local community voices, whether from elders or youth, transformed their plans and bent their timelines to move toward a broader community vision.

### Voices of the People

“When the Ventures Plan was created, I understand there were over 1,500 participants involved during the initial planning process.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“I think that, for us, we actually wrote our own plan. We’re really, I’m very proud of that. Sharon and I did that writing. I think it was some project for that for us, for me, for this conversations future, that it created a lot more buy-in and people could connect to the stories that we were telling, the way that we did that work. I found as I then lead the work for the next 10 years, I think that context made a difference into our ability to be able to really convey the intentions of the strategies. It was just really well-connected, to not only our conversations that we’d had over the 18 months, but also to our values because we’re Lakota women and this is our community.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

“It was an opportunity for us to exercise our self-determination, to be sovereign. We decided what we were going to do. We took the risk. We did it. I feel like those are some lasting impacts that I still see today. We got some traction under that. I think that there’s lots of contributing factors, and I don’t know that Venture’s was the only ingredient in that attitude that still lasts there. I think that it was consistent for a lot longer than ... you might have a grant for 2 or 3 years, and it might be able to help share that, but when you are constantly bringing that message and voice ... and then people saw, like, the Voice of Research project. They were like, ‘That was us that did that?’ I’m like, ‘Yeah, all of us.’ All. We had all these tribal members and created a lot of ownership and pride, but, also, we could do it ourselves.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Commit to the Journey

The genuine commitment of the foundation to tribal communities for the duration of this effort was important to the communities. The longevity, level of funding, and trust that had to evolve over the duration of the project helped ensure its success.

- **Longevity:** All three Tribal Ventures partners valued the opportunity to work over a 10-year period. All three partners lauded NWAf's long-term commitment. They agreed that the time to plan and engage their communities was vital to their work
- **Level of commitment:** Dedicating substantial funds for each of the three tribes to achieve their plans provided a level of reliability not often available. It created the space to think creatively and make plans across other funding silos.
- **Planning and planting the seeds:** Providing a full 18-month planning and preparation period for each community was vital to creating the local foundation of support for this work, and enshrined the plan and the planning process as key to this effort. The ethic around planning assisted the three tribal partners to identify when their plans might need to be adjusted and reset. The three tribal partners described their adjustments and the support from NWAf to course-correct when needed.
- **Trust and partnership:** The evolving relationship between the communities and the NWAf was built around the personal interactions, integrity, and transparency on both sides. Program officer relationships with key local champions was critical to success.

### Voices of the People

"Eighteen months was a real gift; we wrote the plan, got people together across different camps. They heard each other, created synergy. In Lakota, there is a sacred energy that moves in the world; it brings energies together. This is how it felt and the tribal council heard our voices." – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

"NWAf was trying to tackle a problem that no other has—take on rural poverty. And this requires more than simply making grants. It requires involvement. Build upon the culture and history of the people. You must stand beside them. You cannot be a spectator. They [NWAf] ought to be the money with courage." – *NWAf stakeholder*

"Whatever the story is between philanthropy and Indian Country, ... I believe the Northwest Area Foundation has a responsibility to tell that story well ... in a way that helps encourage philanthropy to continue to invest in Indian Country. I believe that their intention over the course of this, they would want to talk about wanting to lead that conversation and bring awareness to Indian Country." – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Support Innovative Governance Approaches

The three tribal governments each decided to establish semi-autonomous nonprofit organizations to house the Tribal Ventures effort. This innovation in self-governance, allowed

for more grassroots engagement, more flexibility, more focus upon the completion of their plans, and a level of insulation from the larger political environment. Like any representative governance structure, tribal governments are responsive to constituents, operate within constitutional structures, and must address many sectors. Working with tribes to secure their support for a local nonprofit entity to oversee and implement this project—and stick to its approved plan—was vital to protecting the effort from the larger political environment.

- **Election cycles:** Tribal elections occurred at a regular frequency, and sometimes could result in a complete turn-over in elected leaders, requiring orientation of new policymakers who may or may not be familiar with Tribal Ventures. For example, the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe held elections every 2 years.
- **Competing priorities:** As new tribal officials are elected and begin to address the many dire needs in their communities, they saw the Tribal Ventures resources as one way to address those needs. Requests for redirecting funds were handled by the foundation and local Tribal Ventures leadership to balance the integrity of their plan with respect for the elected tribal government.
- **Focus on the plan:** The fact that the communities spend 18 months developing a plan and based it on extensive community engagement provided a high level of integrity for each plan. Plans were generally much respected and any efforts to change them required equal levels of community engagement. This engagement then provided stability.
- **Nonprofit:** Establishing nonprofit oversight organizations to administer and own the Tribal Ventures efforts was a successful way to insulate this effort from local political demands, but also to create community-based mobilization to focus on specific priorities of the initiative.
- **Competition within the tribe:** It was important to demonstrate to local leadership that successful nonprofits or financial entities, such as the local CDFI, were not in competition with the tribal government, but were crucial players in a healthy community.

### Voices of the People

“The tribal government didn’t, and still don’t, I don’t think, understand that they’re not in competition with the small businesses. And that was what they were up against. And right now, we have so many small businesses at different stages of development. And ventures and CDFI were the reason that they’re here. They came out of the wherever they were, and said, ‘Hey, I really want to start this. Can you help me?’ And the team helped them, and they’re going strong. And of course, we have all the fledgling ones that are coming, and they’re in various stages of development. That’s huge.”

– Lummi Nation stakeholder

“Tribal council re-appropriating funds to other purposes was an occasional challenge especially when councils turn over. Meetings with council would reverse the re-appropriations in all cases and got things back on track. Turnover, poor resources, and limited options by tribes, or desperate needs, were the main reason for councils trying to redirect funds.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

“That whole mindset of control—having a death grip over everything that’s going on—is one that, you know, they’re thinking that they’re responsible. And I think there has to be an education piece that goes in there if this ever happens again—to sit down and talk about what happened with other tribes. Like, what happened with us. If anybody else is going to do this, think about your tribal government and how they’re going to manage the whole thing. When they signed the agreement, they made a commitment to follow through with all of these works. After the 10 years, they said, ‘We’re going to continue with this.’ But what does that really mean? And how, I think, on both sides, between them, the foundation, how are we going to continue this? We had an idea. They built a structure.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“It’s so different with the leaders that led the way in the beginning. I mean, a lot of them are, what? In their 60s, 70s now? And some have even passed on. And now, a lot of our tribal council is in their 30s, maybe a couple in their 40s, but a lot of them don’t know what went into this work. So, there’s a gap of information, and that, in order to carry forward the community vision, there needs to be a level of education, because a lot of them don’t know what small business incubation is. They don’t know what the Ventures’ economic strategies are. I mean, they do see a building here, but they don’t know what goes into small business incubation. And so, it’s ... a huge learning curve for them, and we don’t want to go back in time to where we started before.”

– *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

## Enlist Dynamic Local Champions

The many successes in each of the three tribal communities could not have occurred without the determination, talents, and organizational skills of the many individual champions who led these efforts over time. The leaders who made a difference in each community, continue to be agents for positive change today.

- **Emerging leaders:** In an exercise of “Where are they now?” we find the many leaders from each local community continue this work in other capacities. For example, in one community that experienced turnover in Tribal Ventures leadership, directors moved to become president of the tribal college, to become tribal chairperson, or to head up another tribal priority. In another example, staff leading elements of the Tribal Ventures initiative went on to lead Native initiatives for another philanthropy.
- **Tribal elders:** The extensive community stakeholder process provided respectful ways to bring out community leadership from elders, natural leaders, and other voices.

## Voices of the People

“The leadership program at the college [is] based upon poverty reduction—tribal leadership to educate future leaders on our true challenges. We are better prepared to talk about our true challenges at the leadership level.” – *Turtle Mountain stakeholder*

“As I lead the work for the next 10 years, I think that context made a difference in our ability to be able to really convey the intentions of the strategies. It was just really well connected to not only our conversations that we had over the 18 months, but also to our values because we are Lakota women and this is our community.”

– *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Use Strategy-Specific and Community-Specific Technical Assistance

More focused community specific technical assistance is a good investment to ensure success. While general assistance was appreciated, we heard from several that more attention to the specific strategy adopted by a community would have been helpful to get them moving faster.

- **Global vs. specific:** Developing local capacity on complex initiatives requires more community specific assistance, such as establishing connections with potential partners, restructuring businesses to qualify for federal set asides, and leveraging tax credits.
- **The power of cross-site support and mentorship:** Annually, the three communities gathered to share their successes, challenges, and future plans. These gatherings created a community of peer support among the individual organizations, their directors and boards as they pursued common community development efforts. The communities were very grateful for, and expressed value gained from, the cross-site community mentorship meetings, or “three Rez meetings.”

## Voices of the People

“This is the microeconomic development, the technical assistance, and the business incubator portion of the work, and this piece of sustainability has been really, probably, the biggest section of the Ventures work. And Adib Jashidi was hired in 2009 as the business coach and continues to do that to this day. He’s provided Indian-preneurship, one-on-one coaching non-stop, 24/7, 7 days a week ... went to homes, listened in the deepest, the hardest, the most difficult parts of communities or the individuals trying to consider this development. The fishing fleet of Lummi is the largest tribal fishing fleet in the Pacific Northwest. About 400 fishermen, divers, and crabbers, and shell fisher people, and Adib has worked virtually, I think, with every one of them, along with several of the artists, and all the other types of businesses.” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“One of the THA staff navigated this process on their own for the first 5 years of the grant, carried out four or five projects and added 100 units to the housing stock on the reservation. It shouldn’t have been this hard. The foundation could have provided key assistance that would have accelerated the progress on the housing.”

– *NWAF stakeholder*

“A factory was manufacturing vehicles for Armed Services, which grew significantly in size due to the success. This growth resulted in not qualifying for federal set-asides anymore. The foundation could have provided technical assistance to solve the problem. This would have included ideas on how to restructure the enterprise to qualify for federal set-aside or contacting a lawyer. This would have required a more hands-on strategic commitment than the foundation felt they were willing to make.”

– *NWAF stakeholder*

[The three Rez meeting] “ended up being a real sister reservation situation over the 10 years of relationship building, support, encouragement, learning together. They tried. Every time we got together, we had a chance to talk about our own things but also, there ... would be evaluation or programming or, ‘How do you do your budgeting?’ ... It’s helped really changed the way we approach the work. We really saw ourselves in this journey with other tribal communities.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Include Community-based Indigenous Engagement and Evaluation

Tribal community-based evaluation capacity building would have been an ideal partner for the Tribal Ventures initiative. Rather than retrospective program evaluations, communities identified the need for an evaluation structure built into their efforts from the very beginning that they could define, own, and learn from for program improvement. Adopting an Indigenous evaluation framework from the very beginning would have provided local values as a key measure, ensure local ownership of data, consider local historical context, and provide meaningful data and feedback. It would also build local evaluation capacity.

- **Building evaluation capacity:** It is important to instill evaluation as a community-based asset, and not as an “outside looking in” process.
- **Base on community values:** Local tribal values could provide markers for measuring success of initiative processes and outcomes.
- **Changing requirements from the foundation:** Local leaders expressed frustration about a moving goal line. A locally based evaluation, would require partners to agree on success from the community perspective and from the funding perspective jointly in the beginning, and not incrementally.
- **Community engagement:** A community-based, Indigenous evaluation framework would provide ongoing roles for community voices, beyond initial planning or administration.

## Voices of the People

“It is suggested to do regular updates as an iterative process. If you are going to do a long duration, things in this day and age—when conditions change so quickly and some things work and some things don’t—you’ve got to be a little more nimble. You’ve got to help your communities be a little more nimble. It doesn’t mean you don’t stick with stuff that is hard. It just means you take an open look at what’s working and what’s not and do more of what’s working.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

“Recognize that maybe more bite-sized pieces of these long, long-term tasks, with an accountability of a progression. So, ... maybe it’s a 10-year or plus commitment that is broken into, say, 3-year blocks that have a living ability to modify and learn as it goes, but that there’s a kind of stair-step possibility to where the community or the group understands, ‘We can keep going, as long as it’s fitting with the intent of what was envisioned.’” – *Lummi Nation stakeholder*

“We had an external evaluator. She tried to use the Kellogg model... We filled out these multiple pages and laid it all out. We had all these inputs and outputs and stuff ... My board looked at that—they had done all the work to give the input to it, and then our evaluator laid it out for us—and they went, ‘This doesn’t make sense to us.’ This was a turning point for us as a community, when we said, ‘Thank you very much Northwest Area Foundation.’ We realized we had more confidence. People had stuck their necks out and hadn’t got it chopped off, and they felt more comfortable with their initiatives. And then they said, ‘Thank you very much for that. We’re not going to use this. And, we’re going to make an evaluation that makes sense for us.’ And so began that process for us of community-driven evaluation.” – *Cheyenne River stakeholder*

## Conclusion

The partners are grateful to their communities for their involvement. One partner shared, “[Our] lesson is we can work with the community to vision solutions to challenges and create change.” The resilience and resolve of tribal communities is truly remarkable, and well demonstrated in each of the three communities working with Tribal Ventures. Despite the tremendous obstacles, each community provided tangible examples of significant changes that occurred in their communities.

## Voices of the People

“The foundation did a lot of things right. I think that the long duration is right. I think the community voice is right.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

“I don’t think the foundation realized how successful the investment had been in certain areas. There were areas where they had made a rather modest investment that really had made a difference.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

“None of the people involved realized what a miracle that they’d accomplished in that one area, and that wasn’t the only area.” – *NWAF stakeholder*

The NWAF and the Tribal Ventures partners accomplished an enormous amount in their 10-year projects. They journeyed into uncharted territory to create opportunities for communities that have a history of trauma and poverty and they learned to navigate the cultural divide. They served as change agents in three distinct reservations, and the communities are stronger for their experiences.

## Appendix A. Indigenous Evaluation Framework

This the Indigenous Evaluation Framework (IEF), is a robust methodological framework rooted in Indigenous values, knowledge, and histories. KAI evaluated the NWAFF's Tribal Ventures partners through this IEF lens.

The IEF was developed by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) to provide a culturally responsive evaluation framework for Indian Country. The IEF is based on the following guiding principles:

- respect tribal goals of self-determination and sovereignty
- acknowledge that indigenous communities have always assessed merit and worth based on values and storytelling
- incorporate broadly held values while remaining flexible and responsive to local culture
- use practices and methods that align with the community's needs
- build ownership by involving the community in defining the meaning, practice, and usefulness of evaluation
- provide opportunities to learn from tribal community programs and using the information to create strong, viable communities

### Tribal Ventures Knowledge Creation

From an evaluation perspective, the Tribal Ventures programs, essentially created a combination of strategies, staffing, and resources to produce a set of outcomes. This report is about what they discovered and what knowledge was created from their implementation. The Tribal Ventures journey was knowledge creation because each community based their learning in their own traditional epistemologies and ways of knowing. They became family and built profound relationships (e.g., 3 Rez Ventures Tribes). In the IEF approach, knowledge is a series of nested circles (Figure 1). The outer circle—the largest—is culture. The second circle is the subjective relationship to the world or the subjective truth. The inner circle—the smallest—is facts (AIHEC, 2009).

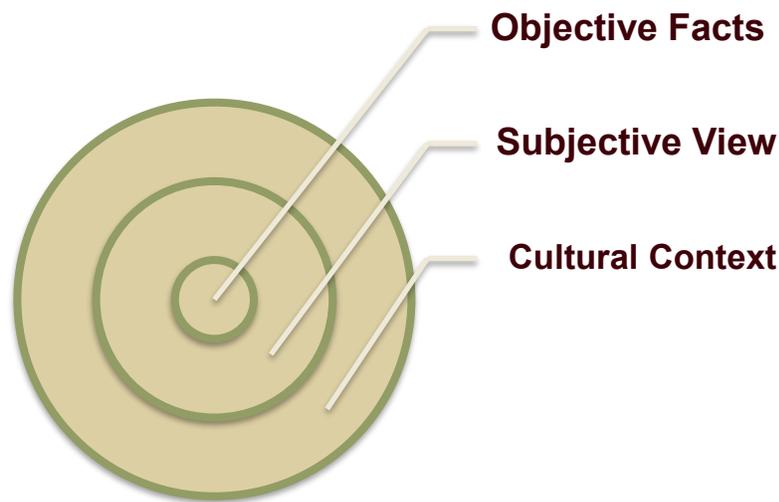


Figure 1: IEF nested baskets of knowledge

The specific principles below are ones that resonated most with the Tribal Ventures partners at the December meeting. Many of the Tribal Ventures partners' success stories can be understood through these principles. They provide a context, or lens, through which to view the enormous strides made by each of the Tribal Ventures communities.

### **Balancing Broadly and Locally Held Values**

We used IEF principles to preserve, maintain, and support the story of Tribal Ventures Champions for Change. Historically, the Cheyenne River Sioux, Lummi Nation, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa have always had ways of assessing merit and worth based on their own individual sets of cultural values (family, neighbors, traditions, culture, history, commerce) and cultural expressions. The beauty of using IEF to tell a story is that it balances broadly held values (e.g., reduce poverty, capture knowledge others can use, increase economic development, and build extensive community engagement) while remaining flexible and responsive to local tribal community values (e.g., lifelong learning, family, balance, water, land, respect, inherent strength, economic strength, educational attainment, health and wellness, cultural teachings, relationships, safety, and infrastructure).

### **Matching Practice and Methods with Community Needs**

Responsive IEF storytelling uses practices and methods from the field of evaluation that fit the needs and conditions of tribal communities. For example, each community used its own individual cultural protocols to foster constructive interactions between members of their respective communities. Cultural considerations included, but were not limited to, worldview and spiritual views, language, tribal history, kinship relationships, family configurations, political orientations, cultural identity, assimilation, education, literacy, perception of time, gender, and sexuality (National Centre for Cultural Competence 2006). Developing these protocols required

mutually agreed-upon procedures, patience, openness, flexibility, and an appreciation and acceptance of the need to interact and communicate for a better understanding of poverty reduction.

## **Help Communities Define Their Key Concepts**

Indigenous stories within an evaluation framework help define concepts, meanings, practices, and encourage community ownership. For instance, the question of how each community defined *poverty* provided the opportunity to explore unique cultural responses to the challenges they faced. Since there was no word in the Indigenous language of each community for *poverty*, the partners worked with communities to identify their best definitions.

Poverty reduction, economic development, and community engagement through Tribal Ventures exist in a uniquely Indigenous context. They are immersed in, and embody, Native cultures and histories. The IEF provides an accurate way to evaluate the Tribal Ventures program. This culturally responsive evaluation framework ensures the work completed by the Tribal Ventures Partners to reduce poverty and build collaborative relationships will be fully understood and valued.

## Appendix B. Tribal-Specific Findings and Impacts of Tribal Ventures: A Storytelling

The Tribal Ventures programs created a combination of strategies, staffing, and resources to produce a set of community outcomes. The journey became one of knowledge creation, as each community based their learning in their own traditional epistemologies and ways of knowing. The next sections explore the Tribal Ventures initiative through each tribe's project summary. The accomplishments of each tribe represent the immediate community changes as a result of Tribal Ventures implementation. The long-term effects and changes are not available at the time of this evaluation.

### Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

The foundation committed \$10 million dollars to support the Pathways to Prosperity initiative to help reduce the reservation's high poverty rate. Pathways to Prosperity's mission was to work together to reduce poverty; build upon the inherent strengths of individuals and the community to improve the sense of inclusion, economic strength, community infrastructure, educational attainment, health status, and cultural assets; and prepare the community to thrive in a diverse, multi-cultural society.<sup>7</sup> The three pathways to accomplish this mission were through inclusion, economic development, and community infrastructure.

Many tribal members move off the reservation for education and jobs because Turtle Mountain is isolated from major markets and transportation hubs. The principal economy is dominated by government services and retail commerce in local towns. There is emerging potential for tourism based around local lakes and the International Peace Garden about 20 miles away. The old Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) constitution requires full tribal council elections every 2 years and this contributes to a highly volatile political environment. Turtle Mountain is an example of a rural reservation that is challenged to provide adequate services to its relatively large membership.<sup>8</sup>

The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa submitted a proposal to NWAFF focused on poverty reduction strategies in December 2005. The needs statement clarified the existence of poverty since the creation of the Turtle Mountain Reservation and included descriptors of poverty for the community. These descriptors were listed as population growth, age, household structure, household income, per capita income, poverty rate, labor force participation rate, education, teens at risk for living in poverty, access to health care, immunizations, sexually transmitted disease, obesity, tobacco use, asthma, cardiovascular disorders, housing needs, employers,

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<sup>7</sup> Davis, T. (2016). *Pathways to Prosperity Tribal Ventures Final Evaluation*, p.9.

<sup>8</sup> Genia, T. (2016). *Forward Strategy for Reservation Ventures Programs*.

payroll data, and public opinion.<sup>9</sup> A series of public meetings were held to determine the factors needed to improve individual and community life related to these descriptors.

Underlying the mission were several postulates that supported the three pathways of the project. The postulates were: (1) the greatest asset of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa are its human resources; (2) by engaging this population in poverty reduction activities, poverty on the reservation can be significantly reduced; and (3) beyond addressing income needs, poverty can be reduced through a comprehensive approach that addresses health, housing, infrastructure, education, and crime, as well as business development, better use of government resources designed to strengthen individual families, and improved financial institution resources.<sup>10</sup> Turtle Mountain is still continuing the Tribal Ventures efforts today.

## Accomplishments

Through Tribal Ventures, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa saw the following accomplishments.

- They established and capitalized a federally certified Native CDFI to provide access to business startup and home acquisition funding.
  - The Turtle Mountain CDFI secured federal certification, provided financial literacy training and credit repair for tribal families, and launched the business lending program, through which they provided loans to launch six new businesses.
- They partnered with the tribal college to provide entrepreneur training and business assistance.
  - The college acquired funding and built a facility designed to provide technology education for its students and community members with the Trading Post Incubator Project.
  - The college developed an associate's degree and baccalaureate degree in leadership.
- They received designation as a Promise Zone site through an Obama Administration initiative. Local leaders will work with the federal government to boost economic activity and job growth, improve educational opportunities, reduce crime, and leverage private investment to improve the quality of life.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Davis, T. (2016). *Pathways to Prosperity Tribal Ventures Final Evaluation*. p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Davis, T. (2016). *Pathways to Prosperity Tribal Ventures Final Evaluation*. p.10.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2017). *Promise Zones*. Retrieved from [https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz)

- They established the Enterprise Center in downtown Belcourt, ND, to house Pathways to Prosperity offices, a cyber café, a tax preparation site, the tribe's community development organization, and the Native CDFI.
  - A partnership with Legal Services of North Dakota resulted in an Earned Income Tax Preparation Campaign, through which they initially opened 300 income tax files and returned over \$100,000 to the community through tax refunds. Over the last few years of the campaign, the number of income tax files grew close to 1,000, and the campaign was recognized as the most successful volunteer income tax assistance site in North Dakota.
  - They offered a financial literacy class at the high school.
  - Two local businesses in downtown Belcourt received funding to assist with sidewalk repairs and/or the beautification of their buildings.
  - Since the cyber café opened, it has attracted users from various demographics. Seen as a successful effort, people use the café every day to job search, check emails, complete timesheets, congregate, do homework, use homebuyer education resources, and provide for social service needs.
  - They ordered and distributed 1,000 radios when they launched the radio project, which provides radios to tribal members.
  - The Pathways website contains lodging and special event links.
  - They distributed a mass mailing newsletter and organizational brochure to over 2,000 people.
  - They opened a full-service bank, owned and operated by tribal members, giving tribal members more access to bank accounts, affordable mortgages, small business loans, and other financial services.
  - Two new restaurants opened in the community.
- They drafted a Master Land Use Plan, Tribal Utility Plan, and Tribal Tourism Plan that the tribal council adopted as guides to long-term reservation development.
  - They held an economic summit to discuss barriers to economic development on the Turtle Mountain Reservation. Workshops during the summit focused on marketing, bookkeeping, and e-commerce.
  - They created a draft Land Use Plan, which included work that resulted in the codification of the Land Use Code.
  - They strengthened the Tribal Corporation's Code through an amendment.
- They developed a local transit system to connect remote tribal settlements to tribal services and coordinated the design, funding, and construction of a Youth Wellness Center.

- They established a Team for Youth and Youth Council with parents, interested community members, and representatives from surrounding schools.
- They funded two youth projects based on the design in the proposal. One project saw a teen teach sewing and crafting to other teenagers. The students' items were then distributed to elders living at the retirement home. Another project received donated clothing from the Old Navy outlet in Albertville, MN, which was then distributed to over 750 community members in need.
- Eight youth volunteers held a high school fiesta that taught about the importance of implementing strategies that could help the community reduce poverty.
- They created a youth individual development account program to support local youth.
- They organized the Turtle Mountain Artist Association, which is a tribal artist cooperative, and established a Native art gallery, studio, and retail facility in Dunseith, ND, on the state highway.
  - They partnered with Art Space in Minot to bring local artisan work to market and support an artist-in-residency effort.
- They developed tribal expertise to obtain federal tax credits and used these credits to construct affordable housing for low-income tribal members, such as:
  - 105 new housing units through four tax credit projects,
  - 2 new 14-unit housing projects that are in the pipeline, and
  - A 20-unit housing project for homeless people.
  - They developed the Turtle Mountain Collaborative Community Outreach Pilot Project for the multi-use Outreach Center at a Dunseith housing site, which became the model for other projects developed.
  - They developed architectural plans for green, energy efficient housing units (comprising two- and three-bedroom homes) in partnership with the local housing authority.
  - They developed multi-use outreach centers and security offices throughout the housing sites.
- They invested in tourism amenities to increase jobs and revenue at the tribal casino.
  - They are planning a casino expansion, which will add a strip mall next to the facility to support local entrepreneurship and employment.
  - Belcourt and Dunseith are now listed in state and regional tourism publications.

- They have invested a total of \$1.1 million to support the Master Tourism Plan and the development of community assets like:
  - a baseball field and softball complex, a lakeside park, and powwow grounds in Dunseith, St. John, and Belcourt;
  - improvements to the Anishinabe Wellness Center (Trading Post) for conferences and retreats;
  - the Sky Dancer RV park and a horse race track;
  - renovations to Chippewa Downs for tourism, which will also add a roping arena;
  - the multi-use outreach facility, Eagle Heart Center, in Dunseith;
  - a veteran’s memorial in Belcourt; and
  - an ATV park in St. John.
- They created a centralized data repository for the tribe through a partnership with Tribal Nations Research Group.
  - This effort supports community data collection through new partnership to guide tribal efforts.

## Lummi Nation

The foundation committed \$6 million to the Lummi Nation Ventures Partnership to reduce poverty rates on the Lummi Nation Reservation. The Lummi Nation Ventures Partnership followed community values of family, traditional culture, wellness and health, land and water, personal identity, freedom, balance, education, self-sufficiency, love and respect, voice, and humor.

Lummi are traditional Coast Salish fishing people, but their subsistence was decimated in the 1950s-60s with construction of dams on major salmon rivers, incursion of foreign fishing fleets, and environmental changes that impacted fish migration. Lummi, who have strong cultural traditions and spiritual practices, place high emphasis on the cohesion of families and clans. Lummi Nation is an example of a reservation located near an urban area.<sup>12</sup>

NWAF reached out to Lummi Nation to request a site visit in June 2003 by foundation representatives, along with a follow-up site visit in the fall 2003.<sup>13</sup> As a result of these meetings, Lummi Nation was notified in December 2003 of their selection to participate in the Tribal Ventures program.<sup>14</sup> Lummi Nation entered into an agreement with the foundation to reduce

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<sup>12</sup> Genia, T. (2016). *Forward Strategy for Reservation Ventures Programs*.

<sup>13</sup> Lummi Ventures staff. (2016), *Lummi Ventures Final Report*.

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 13.

poverty and promote prosperity through development and implementation of strategic goals, objectives, benchmark activities, and a budget of up to \$1 million per year for up to 10 years.<sup>15</sup>

A 2-year planning phase initiated Lummi Nation's Tribal Ventures project. The purpose of the planning phase was to learn from the community about what can and should be done to address poverty and promote prosperity, individual self-reliance, and long-term community stability and wellbeing.<sup>16</sup> The Lummi community expressed, "Poverty and prosperity is not limited to traditional economic considerations, —money and jobs alone are not the answer to poverty. The answers are promoting confidence and self-reliance among those struggling with economic hardship. Jobs and education must be linked to wellness if we are to achieve true prosperity, which is both the challenge and opportunity for the Ventures project."<sup>17</sup>

The Venture Partnership developed six strategies to address: (1) economic development, (2) education vision, (3) families vision, (4) land vision, (5) wellness vision, and (6) culture vision. The funding from NWAFF supported three of these strategies: economic development, education, and families.

## Accomplishments

Through Tribal Ventures, Lummi Nation saw the following accomplishments.

- The Lummi Te'Ti'Sen Center provides business support services and offers small-business development education, food safety certification, and nonprofit and board leadership training programs. The 9,000-square foot facility houses several tribal industries, including a seafood market, café, tribal arts and crafts store, the Te'Ti'Sen Business Incubator, carving shed, and multi-purpose room. The Center is an innovative application of tribal asset-based development, featuring Lummi artists and fishers as entrepreneurs.
  - The Lummi Te'Ti'Sen Center fulfilled a dream that the community had for a long time. As a destination for the surrounding community and visitors, it has helped to create a marketplace for entrepreneurs and raise awareness about Lummi Nation's history, culture, and people.
  - Tribal Ventures and Lummi Nation collaborated to acquire trust land near Interstate 5 and opened the Lummi Gateway Center. With the successful designation of land from fee simple to trust lands, the Center is now on reservation lands.
  - The Te'Ti'Sen Business Incubator is a first of its kind for tribal communities in the country. Primary funding for construction of the Lummi Te'Ti'Sen Center came

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<sup>15</sup> Lummi Indian Business Council. (2004). *Lummi Ventures Report – Interim Report*.

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 13.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 13.

with additional funds from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Washington State Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Business Enterprise Grant, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, and others.

- The 2008 Future Search Conference, held at the Lummi Te’Ti’Sen Center, focused on youth and the future workforce and leadership of Lummi Nation.
- They have held four economic summits in the community since 2007 to help inform education, workforce, and leadership development approaches for the community.
  - The Lummi Nation has adopted and begun implementing a series of recommendations to reshape the educational system based on Lummi needs and values. These activities include the establishment of specialized learning tracks for high school students, such as apprenticeships and hands-on experience for construction trades, service industries, entertainment, and value-added food products.
- Lummi Ventures and Lummi Nation Service Organization collaborated to establish and capitalize on the Lummi CDFI, which provides financial services and products to improve the prosperity and well-being of families. Over time, the Lummi CDFI has expanded its services to include entrepreneurship and small business development, credit building, savings, and asset building.
  - Over a 9-year period (2007–2016), the Lummi CDFI made 137 loans, totaling nearly \$1.4 million dollars. These loans contributed to the creation and retention of 113 jobs in the local economy.
  - Lummi CDFI received its 501c3 designation and certification as a Native CDFI and Community Development Enterprise. As a result, it can access a wider array of federal and philanthropic funding sources to support community economic development.
- They developed the Promoting Unity curriculum as a strategy against racism.
- They partnered with Northwest Indian College to provide financial literacy workshops, entrepreneurship training, and small business coaching through the Lummi Te’Ti’Sen Center.
  - Northwest Indian College’s Cooperative Extension provides regular training for financial literacy by offering the Building Native Communities Financial Skills for Families Workshop each month. This 2-day financial literacy workshop covers topics such as budgeting, checking and savings accounts, shopping on a fixed budget, money values, credit, and more. More than 1,200 families have completed the course since it began in 2006.
  - Since 2009, the small business coach has provided training and coaching to nearly every potential entrepreneur, from the elders to the youth. The

community environment has become more supportive of entrepreneurship. Lummi community members are increasingly asking questions like, “Hmm, maybe I could do something like \_\_\_\_\_?” Lummi entrepreneurs are not afraid to be successful or to share that success with others.

- They constructed the Teen Parent Child Development Center adjacent to the Lummi Nation School so teen mothers can complete their education.
  - The center is a 1,792 SF facility located at Lummi High School. Its program includes a holistic approach for childcare and parental skills development for the optimal health of the family.
  - The school opened in 2010, celebrated its first graduates in 2011, and is continuing in its seventh year (2016–17).
  - The center has served over 30 families (moms and dads), and over 35 parents have completed their GEDs through the center.
- The driver’s relicensing program has served over 1,140 clients; assisted in the reinstatement of over 628 driver’s licenses; and secured \$50,000 in additional program funding through the Tribal Employment Rights Office.
- They supported the development of the Lummi Cultural Arts Association (LCAA), a cooperative that helps artists market their art and broaden their exposure. LCAA organized many destination arts events and operated a retail art gallery in downtown Bellingham for 4 years.
  - Lummi artwork was displayed at the sixth annual Coast Salish Winter Festival at the Te’Ti’Sen Center.
  - More than 70 artisans consigned or sold works at the Cedar Works Gallery and Lummi Te’Ti’Sen (Gateway) Center.
  - Over 48 artists made several trips to the San Juan and Orcas islands, which are part of the traditional homeland of the Lummi people. These trips provided new exposure for their art (with as many as 1,000 people at some events) and helped them to begin healing from historical trauma.
  - At its peak, the retail art gallery generated \$24,596 in annual sales.
  - Lummi artwork is now displayed in some high-end hotels and resorts in the region.
  - Within the Lummi community, there is an increased appreciation of the role that the arts play in supporting cultural and economic development. It is now seen as one of the two anchors of the Lummi community, along with fishing.
- Expansion of specialized and professional skills development education programs includes apprentice and hands-on experience for construction trades; – financial, marketing consulting, tourism, spa/massage; and screen printing services; – media,

audio-visual technology, film, acting, graphic design, playwriting/screenwriting; and product development programs; and value-added food products.

- Lummi CDFI was established as an IRS-designated, 501c3 nonprofit corporation with a community development enterprise certification, through which they offer New Market Tax Credits.
- They formed the Lummi artists' Lummi Cultural Arts Association (LCAA) and the fisher's cooperatives.
  - NWAFF provided the cooperatives with small-business operations training.
- The Lummi Ventures plan has become a model of listening deeply within the community for the wisdom and real-world actions that can bring individual and community healing.
  - Lummi leaders and economic development professionals are exploring options to conduct a similar community listening process, now that their 10-year Lummi Ventures work is complete. The community is increasingly recognizing the need to create systems that work for the Lummi community and to find a way to bring these values into new programs.

## Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

The foundation committed \$9.5 million to support a 10-year strategic plan to reduce poverty through three development areas: (1) social, cultural, and individual development; (2) community and capacity development; and (3) economic development. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures vision was:

The Mnicoujou, Itazipco, Siha Sapa, and Oohenumpa Oyate and their relatives are beginning a healing journey of mind, body, and spirit that will strengthen the Oyate so our families and future generations will be nurtured and secure with their cultural values and prepared to connect to economic, social, and educational opportunities. The Oyate will emerge from this journey with collective wisdom that supports individual and community wellness. In unity, we will take on life's challenges and strive to create and sustain a stable, diverse, and prosperous economy.

Memories of the Wounded Knee Massacre and near-starvation conditions exacerbated by broken treaties run deep. The people are survivors who adhere strongly to their values, families, clans, and sovereignty. They are cautious about relationships with outsiders and insist that others "accept us as where we are." Long-held Lakota beliefs stress family responsibilities and making personal sacrifice for others. Cheyenne River is an example of a remote reservation with several small communities scattered across a vast Prairie landscape.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Genia, T. (2016). *Forward Strategy for Reservation Ventures Programs*.

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe partnered with NWAFF to begin work on the People’s Plan, a plan to reduce poverty from 2006 to 2016. The tribe built strong partnerships within the reservation to work collectively on the plan development. They shared, “The people can point to and say, ‘Yes, we did that; we were part of that.’”<sup>19</sup> Since 2005, when the Tribal Ventures planning group first met with local people to address the definition, issues, and solution to poverty, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe’s plan has been about the people. NWAFF invested \$9.5 million dollars (roughly \$1 million dollars per year), which, with tenacity and creativity, sustained the People’s Plan throughout its 10-year span.<sup>20</sup>

This plan also connects to the larger political and economic forces that impact the ability for Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe’s reservation families and individuals to create and see change.<sup>21</sup> The People’s Plan came from shared ideas and suggestions from young people to elders, and included important input from those who work to help the people.<sup>22</sup> The effort behind this plan was one of sovereignty and partnership. The plan aimed to develop new ways of thinking for community organizations and the tribal government to work together for a common goal to meet the needs of the people.<sup>23</sup>

## Accomplishments

Through Tribal Ventures, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe saw the following accomplishments.

- They established learning centers in remote reservation communities to help low-income tribal members connect with tribal services, GED programs, and work opportunities.
  - They developed eight community learning centers, which staffed eight tutors.
  - More than 800 people have enrolled in the program.
  - Over 120 people have earned their GEDs.
- They implemented a system of working with tribally embedded partners, such as Four Bands Community Fund, a Native community development financial institution. This system helped expand their nonprofit ability to apply and leverage resources to stimulate private enterprise and learning opportunities. They also provided knowledge and resources for people to manage finances, improve credit, save money, and build small businesses and assets.

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<sup>19</sup> Akers, A. & Briggs, D.E. (2016). *Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures 10-year Report (2006–2016)*.

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 19.

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 19.

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 19.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 19.

- Participating small businesses that received technical assistance or coaching had a 67% survival rate. On average, each business that received support created 2.6 jobs on the reservation.
- The Four Bands Community Fund helped 250 to 500 people complete free tax returns annually.
- Four Bands Community Funds program participants reported a 68-point increase in personal credit scores.
- They provided four classes on Workin' with Tradition, a work-readiness training tailored for reservation communities.
  - As a result of these classes, 61 participants have improved their self-awareness and interpersonal soft skills, which are needed for successful employment.
  - They developed a group of eight certified trainers who can continue to provide this class on a regular basis across the reservation.
- They created a nationally recognized and replicable model for a youth internship initiative, which provides opportunities for high school youth to improve their communities while learning valuable leadership, life, and job skills. The model included a youth individual development account program, which included teen job internships, financial literacy training, and savings for higher education and careers.
- Tribal Ventures grants have sponsored more than 100 interns for more than 16,000 hours of work in their communities through art, gardening, food, and wellness efforts.
  - Keya Café is a social enterprise endeavor where young people can work.
  - The Youth Entrepreneurship Internship Program had a 100% success rate.
  - The Making Waves initiative reached 2,000 students directly and 4,000 students indirectly.
- They organized a Native Chamber of Commerce, which included non-Indian businesses, and the Shop Cheyenne River campaign to promote local entrepreneurship and increase the retention and circulation of dollars on the reservation.
- They established and funded a Reservation Partnership Fund to provide matching grants to expand businesses to create new jobs and a Community Development Fund to spur community-determined development initiatives in local communities.
  - They funded over 27 businesses with an 86% outcome success rate.
  - Tribal Ventures awarded a total of \$996,300 in grant funds with matching funds of over \$1.9 million invested in reservation business expansion.
  - Oyate Connections, with the work force initiative, effectively stabilized 477 programs.

- They had 44 youth participate in their summer youth program.
- Through the Cheyenne River Voices research, Tribal Ventures carried out one of the most comprehensive, community-driven, primary data collection efforts to date on a reservation.
  - They successfully collected survey data from 819 community members.
  - The research changed the way people, organizations, and leaders plan and prepare to more effectively tell the data stories on Cheyenne River.
  - This work has been nationally recognized as a model and methodology for gathering more meaningful and accurate data in Indian Country. It allows the community to identify their strengths and weaknesses and validate those issues from a uniquely cultural perspective.
- They conducted research on the community's interest and need for a Lakota immersion childcare center.
  - This research has helped inform the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's new Lakota language agency, which is charged with starting an immersion preschool.
- Cheyenne River Tribal Ventures invested in over 50 different community organization events and activities that promoted healing and positive cultural self-identity.
  - Approximately, 2,129 reservation residents attended these events.
  - They held several Lakota Create Nights in Cherry Creek, SD, in 2009 and 2010 with over 196 community members attending.
  - They held a total of 30 Lakota Strength workshops in six communities with approximately 281 total participants from 2010 to 2011.
  - Tribal Ventures provided over 200 leadership training events to help build skills and strategic thinking among the tribal council and multiple tribal departments. This work impacted approximately 8,400 individuals.
- They have successfully hosted the KLND radio station over the course of 10 years.
- They managed two grant programs: (1) the Reservation Partnership Fund provided matching grants to expand businesses to create new jobs and, (2) the Community Development Fund spurred community-determined development initiatives in the local communities.
  - These programs awarded 28 grants (totaling \$996,300) to Cheyenne River Reservation-based businesses that were ready to grow their business and increase jobs, services, or infrastructure in the community. With these funds, 86% of grant recipients achieved their desired outcomes and leveraged a total of \$1.9 million in additional investments.

- The programs awarded grants to 59 community organizations and groups. Each grant ranged from \$1,000 to \$50,000 to build their capacity and improve the services they deliver on the reservation. With these funds, 85% of grant recipients achieved their goals.
- They organized the Cheyenne River Chamber of Commerce, which brings together local businesses to help promote Cheyenne River as a destination and continues to grow the local economy.
  - They successfully carried out a Shop Cheyenne River campaign to promote local entrepreneurship and increase the retention and circulation of dollars on the reservation.