

# Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R/ED)

## Subgrant Application

South Dakota Department of Corrections

**APPLICATION DUE: June 7, 2024**

Applications with original signatures must be **submitted and received** by the Department of Corrections by the close of business on **June 7, 2024**. Faxed and emailed applications will not be accepted.

Submit complete applications to:

*John Stewart*  
*Department of Corrections*  
*3200 East Highway 34*  
*Pierre, SD 57501-5070*

Funding under this application is non-competitive and not guaranteed to each applicant. The application narrative and budget must be approved by both the SD Department of Corrections and the Council of Juvenile Services. If approved, the application content will be presented to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for their approval of any addition of program purpose areas that may be needed to support the approved plan.

### SECTION 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

<b>Applicant: Brown County</b>		
Address: 25 Market Street		
City/State/Zip: Aberdeen, SD 57401	Phone: (605) 626-7110	Fax: (605) 626-4010
Email: Lynn.Heupel@browncounty.sd.gov	Federal Employer or Payee Identification Number (FEIN): 46-6000011	
<b>Project Director Name: Kelsi Vinger</b>		Title: Diversion Coordinator
Agency: Brown County State's Attorney Office	Address: 22 Court Street Suite 2	
City/State/Zip: Aberdeen, SD 57401	Phone: (605) 626-7130	Fax: (605) 626-7132
Email: Kelsi.Vinger@browncounty.sd.gov		
<b>Please indicate the name of the service(s) implemented: Coordination and facilitation of educational and relational skill building groups for indigenous youth in our community, not limited to, but including, resource coordination, tutoring, peer mentoring, and traditional ceremony.</b>		
<b>Project Title:</b>	Wotakuye Oyate: Kinship Nation Inter-Tribal Network	
<b>Requested Project Period:</b>	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	

## SECTION 2. PROJECT BUDGET

The Council of Juvenile Services will award or not award funding based the extent to which program design addresses a recognized need and whether the proposal is financially responsible and efficient. Funds will be paid through a reimbursement process for items specifically outlined and approved in the application.

**Applicants may apply for up to \$30,000.**

**Non-supplanting Requirements:** Funds or other resources of the applicant normally devoted to programs and activities designed to meet the needs of criminal justice will not be diminished in any way as a result of a grant award of federal funds. The project for which assistance is being requested will be in addition to, and not a substitute for, criminal justice services previously provided without federal assistance.

<b>A. Personnel</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Employee Fringe Benefits</i>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>B. Contracted Services</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Group/Event Facilitators	\$5,000
Ceremony Facilitator Honorariums	\$3,000
Peer Mentors	\$3,000
Cultural Advisor	\$4,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$15,000
<b>C. Travel and Per Diem</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$
<b>D. Equipment</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Cell Phone Line	\$255
Furnishings for Program Space	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$1,255
<b>E. Operating Expenses</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Stipend for Space	\$6,000
Cultural Event Supplies	\$5,500
Wellbriety/White Bison Trainings	\$1,650
**Website/Marketing	**\$3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$16,150
<b>Total Project Budget -- Combined totals for all columns</b>	<b>\$32,405</b>

NOTE: If there is a change in the above budget, programs will need to request an amendment to their budget. All amendments must be requested in writing **prior to the expenditure of funds.**

**SECTION 3. BUDGET NARRATIVE**

<p>In the space provided, explain the relationship between budgeted items listed in Section 2 and project activities. Include information (data and criteria) as to how you arrived at budget estimates. Discuss all items by category and in full.</p>		
<p><b>Personnel Narrative</b> - Explain how the compensation and expenses were calculated, duties of the position, and any other information about personnel of the project. If proposed funding covers more than one position, you must identify the duties and estimated percent of time for duties that directly relate to the successful implementation of the program(s).</p>		
<p><b>Position #1:</b></p>		
<p><b>Justification for the position :</b></p>		
<p>If the position is <b>existing staff</b>, explain how duties associated with this award are <b>outside the current scope</b> of their position and a provide a <b>plan</b> explaining how all duties associated with the position will continue to be provided and funded during this award:</p>		
<p>Personnel Responsibilities &amp; Duties <i>(must directly relate to the implementation of the program)</i></p>		Estimated % Time
I.		
II.		
III.		
IV.		
Wage/Salary:		
Benefits:		
<p><b>Position #2:</b></p>		
<p><b>Justification for the position :</b></p>		
<p>If the position is <b>existing staff</b>, explain how duties associated with this award are <b>outside the current scope</b> of their position and a provide a <b>plan</b> explaining how all duties associated with the position will continue to be provided and funded during this award:</p>		
<p>Personnel Responsibilities &amp; Duties <i>(must directly relate to the implementation of the program)</i></p>		Estimated % Time
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
Wage/Salary:		
Benefits:		

**Please attach additional sheets for more than 2 positions**  
**SECTION 3. BUDGET NARRATIVE CONTINUED**

<b>Contracted Services Narrative</b> - Explain the consultant fees, consultant expenses, contracted services, the cost per service/per youth being served, how the cost for services was calculated, and the process that would be or has been conducted to select the consultant. <b><u>Contracted services fees cannot exceed \$650 per day.</u></b>	
<b>Consultant #1:</b>	Cultural Advisor/Community Network Coordinator
Consultant Fees:	\$4,000 - \$17 an hour
Contracted Service:	The community network coordinator's scope of duties will ensure that there is an individual dedicated to responding to the public through consistent communication practices, organizing events, managing public marketing efforts, coordinating activities, and connecting community members with resources in need of referrals.
Selection Process:	Throughout the past year, multiple meetings have been held to discuss planning and implementation. It is our belief that having a liaison to help bridge the relationships and ideas between the county and the tribal community will lead to a more successful project. There is expressed interest by a community member who has envisioned this exact project coming to fruition.
<b>Consultant #2:</b>	Ceremony Facilitator
Consultant Fees:	\$3,000 - Honorarium of at least \$50 per ceremony to be paid to ceremony facilitator.
Contracted Service:	Ceremony facilitators will receive an honorarium for services rendered to the community.
Selection Process:	Facilitators will be American Indian individuals with knowledge and experience in traditional ceremony. There may be a variety of ceremony leaders dependent on the need and preference of the participants.
<b>Consultant #3:</b>	Group Facilitators
Consultant Fees:	\$5,000 – pay group facilitators \$25 per group or event they wish to provide. This is figured at 4 events per week for the duration of a year.
Contracted Service:	Plan, coordinate, host group or event facilitation.
Selection Process:	Facilitator guidelines will be established and available to the public. Facilitators will be selected from within the community and will be evaluated for appropriateness against the guidelines. Their group content will also be weighed against the mission and values of the organization for appropriateness. For some facilitators who agree to a consistent service requiring specialty training, a contract may be established to include the costs of any possible training.
<b>Consultant #4:</b>	Peer Mentors – Northern State University Cangleska Waste' (Good Circle) Program
Consultant Fees:	\$300/month if greater than or equal to 20 hours worked. Figured at ~\$15/hour.
Contracted Service:	Language, Tutoring, Ceremony, Cultural Education, Mentoring, Skill Building, Talking Circles, and groups
Selection Process:	In ongoing conversations with the Program Director, there are students that would be interested in providing programming and mentorship to adolescents involved in the program. Additionally, as these peer mentors are enrolled in Northern State University, it would provide

	them an opportunity to educate the emerging adult population on post-secondary education options.
<b>Travel and Per Diem Narrative</b> – Explain the calculation of travel costs for travel <u>outside the home jurisdiction</u> , (travel must be calculated at current state rates (\$0.42 per mile and \$32 per diem)), how the expenses are directly related to the implementation of the project, and if out-of-state travel is anticipated, give particulars (i.e., location, state, dates, purpose, cost).	
<b>Purpose of Travel:</b>	
	$[Mileage] \times \$0.42 =$ $[Number\ of\ Travel\ Days\ for\ per\ diem] \times \$32.00 =$
<b>Purpose of Travel:</b>	
	$[Mileage] \times \$0.42 =$ $[Number\ of\ Travel\ Days\ for\ per\ diem] \times \$32.00 =$
<b>Equipment and Operating Expenses Narrative</b> – Explain the supplies and equipment costs directly related to the implementation of the program or project. You must be specific regarding the items in which you intend to use federal funding. For example, a budget item of “office expenses” will not be accepted as these items must be detailed. You need to identify what you anticipate for office expenses and list each item and the estimated costs. Items not specifically outlined will not be eligible for reimbursement.	
<b>Equipment</b> – List nonexpendable items that are to be purchased and show how you calculated these costs. Nonexpendable equipment is tangible property having a useful life of more than 2 years.	
\$255 – 6 month Straight Talk Unlimited Prepaid Plan \$1,000 – Furniture for the space	
<b>Operating Expenses</b> – List items by type (office supplies, postage, training materials, copying paper, and expendable equipment) and show how you calculated these costs. Generally, supplies include any materials that are expendable or consumed during the course of the project.	
\$6,000 - Stipend for Space - \$500/month  \$5,500 – Cultural Event/Activity Supplies – This amount was calculated after consulting with local leaders who spend on average \$2,500 for one large event that would be held annually. The remaining \$3,000 would be utilized throughout the remainder of the year for smaller activities such as beading, sewing, community garden plot, meals, and other serving supplies in addition to miscellaneous office supplies.  Wellbriety and White Bison Trainings - \$1,650 for 3 people to become trainers in this programming.  **\$3,000 for creation and hosting of a website that can be utilized as a platform to share upcoming events, resources, and a portal of communication and other marketing Please note that if the application must be funded for only \$30,000, we would ask that this be removed from the budget.	

## SECTION 4. APPLICATION NARRATIVE

### A. PROJECT ABSTRACT AND DEMONSTRATION OF NEED

Living in a cross-cultural, urban environment, presents many challenges for Native American and First Nations citizens residing off the reservation. One of the greatest challenges is experiencing alienation from the broader communities they live in, along with a sense of isolation from cultural practices that have historically been promoted by their tribe in a myriad of ways. This experience has been linked nationally to poor mental health outcomes such as higher rates of suicide, addiction, and restricted access to community resources.

For most Indigenous nations, kinship, and connection has always been essential for creating the cultural context in which values, teachings, and a healthy way of life has flourished. One proven method for addressing the challenges faced by urban Indigenous peoples are inter-tribal cultural community centers. The process of establishing a diversion program for Indigenous youth located within Brown County necessitates building nation-to-nation trust, and the initial year of grant funding was spent working to create those relationships. Through this process, it has become evident that an inter-tribal center must be established. As a project founded on Indigenization, community members will hold an integral role in establishing and sustaining programming, this network will provide a platform to allow for work toward restorative healing.

The mission of the Wotakuye Oyate is to build, honor, and promote Indigenous cultural resurgence through the regeneration of a healthy kinship network between citizens of native and non-native nations in Brown County. The purpose is to support a kinship network that allows Indigenous people residing in the area to renew and revive their cultural practices while simultaneously gaining greater access to resources and supports.

According to 2023 Brown County data, there was an 8% increase of American Indian youth in our secure detention facility. More specifically, Indigenous youth aged 10-17 made up 5.6% of our population while they represented 26% of our detention population. By creating this network, we will be able to create a culturally responsive diversion program, while also providing programming,

cultural practices, and connections to those already system impacted or at risk of justice involvement.

## **B. STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

In July of 2023, Brown County was awarded this grant for the initial purposes of creating a culturally responsive diversionary program for our Indigenous youth. This idea was adopted from a similar program that was taking place in Pennington County. Over the past year, we have conversed with agencies and stakeholders that are interested in reducing our racial and ethnic disparities. It is important to note that all minority youth are overrepresented in Brown County's Juvenile Detention Center. The most significant disparity is seen in our Native American youth and what we hope to address first and foremost.

Through our initial year of project development, we were able to hear from community members who expressed that there are steps that need to be taken prior to developing the peer-court style, diversion program. The first step was to give the system impacted youth and families a voice to tell their stories and identify components within this initiative that will be most beneficial to our community. While there was no disagreement that a diversion program is essential, community members expressed a desire for a holistic, achievable strategy that incorporates the family and community systems prior to actual implementation of the program. No young person enters the juvenile justice system alone. Often, the path that brought them before a Judge was impacted by a constellation of people, whether from school, home, or the community. Restorative healing is an ineffective idea if it excludes systemic healing, which is why we must listen to the individuals and families who have spoken honestly with us over the past year. Creating a sense of safety and trust with the court system can only be achieved when we center indigenous voices, thoughts, and ideas.

In an informational meeting that was held earlier this spring, the community asked for parent mentors or advocates with knowledge or experience with the juvenile justice system, to walk

alongside them while navigating the system, sober support meetings specifically for adolescents, and most importantly a safe space for these activities to occur. According to *Identifying Protective Factors to Promote Health in American Indian and Alaska Native Adolescents: A Literature Review*, increasing protective factors like personal wellness, familial and non-familial connectedness, positive opportunities, and cultural connectedness positively influenced adolescent substance use, delinquent behaviors, suicide attempts, and academic success.

Due to the broken relationships between states and tribal peoples, historic distrust is apparent, even as it relates to this project. Members of the Native community have expressed a desire to build trust with the justice system, but this can only be done by promoting internal empowerment. We seek to take the next step this year by developing a network of peer professionals who will work within this community-based organization to deliver culturally rich programming to this population before, during, and after involvement with the court system.

Tribal citizens and members of the local community have worked together over the past year to design elements of a safe, supportive, and structured environment, an inter-tribal center called Wotakuye Oyate, which will act as a platform for program delivery. This organization has been designed to utilize traditional and cultural practices alongside evidence-based programming to provide the community a robust opportunity for restorative healing. We believe that this idea will have a greater impact of reducing our racial disparities.

Phase 1: Obtain resources to aid in implementation.

- I. Securing a non-denominational location that would be used to host group activities, community feeds, and programming.
- II. Determine if there is a need to apply for training and technical assistance through the National Criminal Justice Training Center.
- III. Explore resources such as Tribal Access to Justice Innovation, Tribal Law and Policy Institute, and Tribal Youth Resource Center.



- IV. Create marketing materials.
- V. Establish eligibility criteria for facilitators and guidelines for participants.
  - i. Create policies and procedures to ensure information remains confidential.
- VI. Host talking circles for youth to attend instead of attending traditional 12-step meetings.
- VII. Research the ability to have advocates/mentors for parents of youth whom are system involved.
- VIII. Plan initial community events.
- IX. Establish official methods of communication and contact.
- X. Identify tribal partners and organizational relatives.
- XI. Utilize Community Based Participatory Research.
- XII. Select assessment instrument that is validated specifically for use with Indigenous populations.
- XIII. Determine data collection methods and what factors will be measured.
  - i. Define success of the program.

Phase 2: Coordinate implementation.

- I. Establish a schedule for the community center with regular, attended hours, and consistent programming.
- II. Establish programming outlines and selection of curriculum.
  - a. Programming will be delivered through a traditional framework, incorporating four primary structures that will choose practices and programming that is meaningful to them:
    - i. Maske Society – female friend society dedicated to building kinship with female or female identifying citizens.

- ii. Kola Society – male friend society dedicated to building kinship with male or male identifying citizens.
- iii. Prospering Ones – network dedicated to youth and where we envision the idea of the diversionary program naturally occurring.
- iv. and Friend of the Nation – support network for those who are not Native American but seek support and connect in kinship with Native people. The primary purpose being to act as a bridge between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, cultivating a greater sense of belonging and trust.

III. Select staff and service providers.

IV. Coordinate training for providers, staff, and community members.

V. Development of website, moderated Facebook page, and/or Instagram account.

Phase 3: Mobilize the community to assume responsibility for supported services through involving various sectors.

I. Hold community events to raise awareness of the program with the purpose being to build interest and gain community buy-in.

II. Seek partnerships with other organizations in the community that are child and family serving.

III. Assess possibility for donation of land for Inipi.

IV. Provide data presentations to community members and stakeholders.

Phase 4: Sustaining the program.

I. Apply for grant funding through other agencies/sources for continued funding and sustainability.

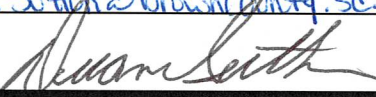
II. Request diversion incentive reimbursement funds, paid to the county, be utilized towards this project.

**SECTION 6. SIGNATURES**


The officials who certify this document agree to adhere to all terms and conditions relating to this application. Duplication of responsibilities by one individual for any position listed below is NOT acceptable.

**Original Signatures are Required**


**County Commission Chair**

Name	Duane Sutton	Title	Commission Chairman		
Address	25 Market St.	City/State/Zip	Aberdeen, SD 57401		
E-mail	Duane.Sutton@browncounty.sd.gov	Phone	605-626-7115	Fax	605-626-4010
Signature		Date	5/28/2024		


**B. Project Director**

Name	Kelsi Vinger	Title	Diversion/JDAI Coordinator		
Address	22 Court Street Suite 2	City/State/Zip	Aberdeen, SD 57401		
E-mail	Kelsi.Vinger@browncounty.sd.gov	Phone	605-626-7130	Fax	605-626-7132
Signature		Date			

**C. Financial Officer**

Name	Lynn Heupel	Title	County Auditor		
Address	25 Market St., Ste. 1	City/State/Zip	Aberdeen, SD 57401		
E-mail	Lynn.Heupel@browncounty.sd.gov	Phone	605-626-7110	Fax	605-626-4010
Signature		Date	5-28-2024		

**D. Other Official**

Name	Karly Winter	Title	Brown County State's Attorney		
Address	22 Court St. Suite 2	City/State/Zip	Aberdeen, SD 57401		
E-mail	Karly.winter@browncounty.sd.gov	Phone	605-626-7130	Fax	605-626-7132
Signature		Date	5/30/2024		

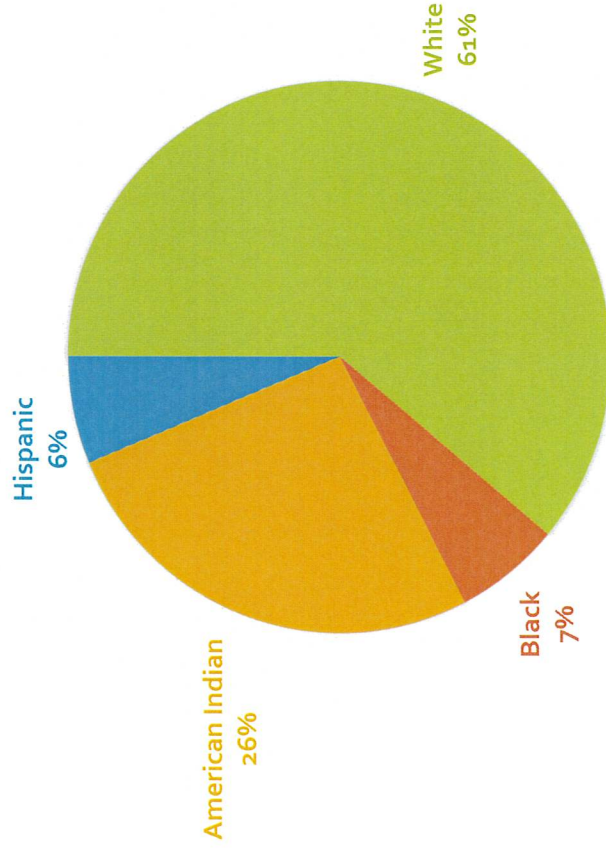
**SECTION 7. ATTACHMENTS**

**Description of Attachments** – Identify and describe the significance of all additional materials you include as attachments. Please limit additional materials to items such as program effectiveness documentation; pertinent letters of support or commitment; research documentation; resource documentation; and any other materials. Attach all additional documents following this page.

<b>Attachment 1</b>
Detention Admissions by Race – 2023 Data
<b>Attachment 2</b>
SAMHSA Native Connections Article – “Culture is Prevention.”
<b>Attachment 3</b>
Letter from Northern State University Circle Program
<b>Attachment 4</b>
<b>Attachment 5</b>
<b>Attachment 6</b>

**ENCLOSE RELEVANT ATTACHMENTS AFTER THIS PAGE**

# DETENTION ADMISSION BY RACE



According to SD Kids Count, the 2022 population estimate was  
White – 82.5%  
American Indian – 5.6%  
Black – 2.8%  
Multiracial – 9.2%  
8% increase in American Indian youth

## Culture is Prevention

A youth group drums at a Pow Wow. A group of young women participate in a talking circle to discuss dating violence. Youth attend traditional language classes. A young man asks a traditional practitioner for a ceremony. A community holds a sweat once a month. Is this prevention?

Native Connections (NC) grantees know, from their own experience and from that of other grantees and partners, that culture is prevention. But how do we convince others – funders, Tribal councils, community members? What, besides anecdote, demonstrates this is true? How do we know that cultural practices are protective factors?

There's research! Research shows that the risk for substance abuse and other adverse behaviors increases as the number of risk factors increases, and that protective factors reduce the risk of youth engaging in substance misuse.<sup>1</sup> Categories of protective factors positively associated with health and social outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth include: personal wellness, positive self-image, self-efficacy, familial and non-familial connectedness, positive opportunities, positive social norms, and cultural connectedness. Such factors positively influenced adolescent alcohol, tobacco, and substance use; delinquent and violent behavior; emotional health including depression, suicide attempt; resilience; and academic success.<sup>2</sup> In a study of suicide attempts among AI/AN youth, the authors concluded that increasing protective factors was more effective at reducing the probability of a suicide attempt than was decreasing risk factors.<sup>3</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/substance-abuse/risk-and-protective-factors-substance-use-abuse-and-dependence>

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Primary Prevention*. 2017 Apr;38(1-2):5-26. doi: 10.1007/s10935-016-0455-2. Identifying Protective Factors to Promote Health in American Indian and Alaska Native Adolescents: A Literature Review, [Henson M](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Sabo S](#)<sup>2</sup>, [Trujillo A](#)<sup>3</sup>, [Teufel Shone N](#)<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Borowsky, I. W., Resnick, M. D., Ireland, M., & Blum, R. W. (1999). Suicide attempts among American Indian and Alaska native youth: Risk and protective factors. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 153(6), 573-580.



We see NC grantees promoting and creating strengths-based programs for youth across the country. One grantee will offer cultural workshops to 100 community members, that include traditional cooking, gardening and arts and crafts. Another grantee plans to increase cultural pride and self-awareness by facilitating youth group meetings which promote a sense of self, community, and well-being. Another grantee is holding regular traditional storytelling events and traditional games for youth. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribe, a sub-recipient of Southern Plains Tribal Health Board, sum it up with this marketing message, “Tradition, not Addiction.” Some grantees are combining cultural activities with evidence-based activities such as Project Venture and/or Question, Persuade, Refer or Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. NC grantees know that cultural practices and events can build connectedness, model positive social norms, personal wellness, and contribute to the other positive outcomes listed above.



Cultural values are the threads that tie one tribe’s or village’s practices to other indigenous practices; they are also the links between the past and the present. They align with what the research tells us works in prevention. In community gatherings we see the traditional values of generosity and belonging. In activities that connect youth and elders, the value of respecting and honoring the wisdom and history that elders carry is

demonstrated, as well as providing a sense of belonging for the youth. Storytelling and story circles honor traditional wisdom, but also give participants the opportunity to speak their own truth, honor their identity, and learn values and skills that contribute to self-efficacy. It is the transmission of these values that lays the foundation for resilience.

But how do you tell the story of the cultural activities being implemented in your community? How do we know they are working? There are current and historic problems with research and evaluation in AI/AN communities. Indigenous communities are concerned that most research has focused on risk factors, which encourages stigmatization. Because of this many AI/AN communities are drawn to strengths-based models. These approaches emphasize the protective role of culture, cultural processes, and activities in prevention. They are also drawn to Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) as a type of research that is more respectful,



ethical, sympathetic, and useful than research associated with exploitation and colonization.<sup>4</sup>

CBPR is a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community and has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities.<sup>5</sup> It has also been used to increase the capacity of community members to use research to further the goals of the community. It will ultimately lead to legitimizing cultural interventions in the eyes of the larger research community and funders who rely on “research-based” criteria to fund activities.

One group of researchers have described CBPR as having the following characteristics:

- Emphasizes protective factors, resilience, and well-being
- Develops community capacity and collaboration on design of local programs
- Conceptualizes suicide as a social problem, not an individual problem
- Focuses on community-level factors, not individual-level factors<sup>6</sup>

Future work products will expand on how to implement CBPR in your community, starting with determining what outcomes the community is interested in tracking and then proceeding to planning and developing the measures and instruments that will best meet the needs of the community and demonstrating the effectiveness of the interventions being implemented by the grantee’s Strategic Action Plan.

*“Expanding on this community-level perspective, it is imperative to develop interventions capable of increasing community health as well as individual well-being. To date, suicide prevention intervention research focused on producing standardized interventions has had disappointing results. To some extent, this may reflect difficulties in implementation. We argue, therefore, that focusing on the processes of change through community engagement and participatory inquiry may help identify and address the limitations of current interventions. Such an approach to research ensures that there is always knowledge gained, whatever the outcome.”*

Wexler, L. et. al., Advancing Suicide Prevention Research with Rural American Indian and Alaska Native Populations, *Am J Public Health*. 2015 May; 105(5): 891-899

<sup>4</sup> Smith LT. Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. London, England: Zed Books; 1999.

<sup>5</sup> W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program, <http://www.kellogghealthscholars.org/about/community.php>

<sup>6</sup> Wexler, L. et. al., Advancing Suicide Prevention Research With Rural American Indian and Alaska Native Populations, *Am J Public Health*. 2015 May; 105(5): 891-899.



In June 2023 Kelsi Vinger from the states attorney's office contacted Lara Nelson from Northern's American Indian Circle Program to inquire about a collaboration project. During the time between July 1, 2023, to May 20, 2024, Northern's program has been active in community engagement and outreach, setting up meetings to engage potential stakeholders, and recruitment for college mentors for the Lehánl Wičhíčhağapi (Prospering Ones), a college to high school mentoring project. The majority of the work has been on a volunteer basis and will continue to be as the new grant cycle is written for July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025, unless an honorarium is offered.

Northern's Circle Program's hope is that we continue to partner this next grant cycle as we begin exploring holistic training, stakeholder land or monetary commitments, program budgets, community engagement and ongoing meetings. This next phase is critical to begin to develop this grassroots project from the ground up and to identify a specific coordinator to lead the efforts toward program strategy, vision and timeline to meet future goals. Northern State continues to be committed to partnering and moving this community project along long term.