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SOURCE: National Relief Charities



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Native Youth Know How to Improve Health & Safety

The "Native Youth Know" Partnership Is Funding Youth-Led Solutions to Improve Public Safety and Quality of Life in Tribal Communities

PHOENIX, AZ--(Marketwired - Jan 19, 2015) - Native American youth are developing grant-based creative solutions to enhance public safety and well-being in tribal communities, thanks to a partnership underway by the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs, the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona and National Relief Charities.

Collaborating as "Native Youth Know," this partnership arose out of the recognition that issues affecting youth are often identified yet unaddressed and that youth need a voice in identifying solutions for their own safety, health and well-being.

HIGHLIGHTED LINKS

[Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs](#)

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According to Rafael Tapia, Program Manager for Long-Term Solutions at [National Relief Charities](#), "Native Youth Know is engaging the talent, intelligence and energy of Arizona's Native youth in shaping and launching projects that improve health and cultural well-being and thus public safety." The grant recipients will present their solutions in Phoenix at this year's [Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day](#), which is focusing on public safety and the health and wellness of Native youth.

Kristine FireThunder, Director of the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs, reports, "The social issues connected with public safety can adversely impact youth and lead to poor decision-making, thus influencing the overall safety of a rural or tribal community."

The Commission views public safety as a broad concern that spans behavioral health, substance abuse and suicide prevention, as well as domestic violence, gang activity, trafficking, harassment, littering, hazardous weather and truancy, concerns that are prevalent in many communities throughout the U.S.

The Native Youth Know partnership invited [grant proposals](#) for creative projects that will be youth-led, have a positive impact on youth and involve prevention or protection from events and issues that could endanger or harm people in their community. The partnership is funding five projects, empowering Native youth to:

1. Develop a park and recreation area for Native youth and adults residing in the Hopi Junior/Senior High School housing complex.
2. Retrofit and renovate a greenhouse and create a sustainable garden, enhancing the Little Singer Community School's promotion of natural nutrition, health and well-being of Navajo youth.
3. Train the Pascua Yaqui community on the ancestral diet and edible plants and fruits harvested from the environment, and construct a community garden to complement the project.
4. Educate the Guadalupe community on Yaqui history and culture, addressing issues rooted in historical trauma and loss of culture.
5. Host three music workshops on the Navajo Reservation, working with local and known artists to promote music for health and well-being among Native teens.

Maria Dadgar, Executive Director for Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, believes that "providing opportunities such as the Native Youth Know grants empowers youth to take a leadership role with their peers and see that they can make a difference."

About the Native Youth Know Partners: The Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs considers and studies conditions among the Indians residing within the State of Arizona, and supports state and federal agencies in assisting Tribal Councils with mutual goals and implementation plans. The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona provides member tribes with the means for action on matters that affect them collectively and individually, to promote tribal sovereignty and to strengthen tribal governments. National Relief Charities serves immediate needs and supports

long-term solutions that improve quality of life for Native Americans throughout the Southwest and Northern Plains. Visit <http://www.azcia.gov/> and <http://itcaonline.com> and www.nrcprograms.org to learn more.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs

Kristine FireThunder

Kfirethunder@az.gov

602-542-4421

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona

Maria Dadgar

Maria.Dadgar@itcaonline.com

602-258-4822

National Relief Charities

Helen Oliff

PR@nrc1.org

877-281-0808



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