

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROJECT SUMMARY

Nearly one in four (23%) Native American households experience low food security, meaning not enough food quality, variety, or desirability of dietary intake. Because low food security is an everyday issue on the reservations PWNA serves, nutrition-related disease rates are high. Contaminated drinking water is also an issue in many of the communities PWNA serves. Although many food banks operate within our service area, a study by America's Second Harvest shows that the majority of food banks lack an adequate supply of food to meet demand.

PWNA is committed to increasing its capacity to help address the issue of food insecurity on the 60 American Indian reservations in its 12-state area. By expanding its nutrition services in high-need communities, PWNA is promoting access to healthier food choices and providing nutrition education in the geographically-isolated and often impoverished reservation communities.

In addition to making weekly shipments of food and supplies to remote tribal communities in the Northern Plains and Southwest regions of the U.S. through its immediate relief services, PWNA takes a long-term approach, supporting Community Investment Projects (CIPs) that enhance nutrition and health, capacity building and development of sustainable resources that evolve from within tribal communities.

PWNA recognizes that, often, the only impediments to addressing key issues are technical assistance and seed funding. PWNA addresses this need through CIPs – grant-based services – such as Project Grow. Communities wishing to promote food sustainability, health and nutrition may submit grant proposals, and they typically focus on disease prevention from poor nutrition and/or ways of increasing volume and variety of locally grown healthy food. The grantees monitor not only for immediate impact but also how the project will continue to impact the community going forward.

Rafael Tapia, Jr., PWNA's Vice President of Programs, concludes; "The opportunity to partner with tribal communities and leverage resources from within to create sustainable outcomes is one clear gain from these projects. Another is the capacity building that is taking root as members of the community learn new skills and use them to improve quality of life for themselves and their families."

Selected Community Investment Projects

PWNA recently awarded 6 CIP grants on 5 reservations in 3 states. These projects are in the first phase of implementation, as of September 2016. Additional project proposals have been awarded, and more are under review. Please inquire with our Media Contact for future updates.

1. **First Mesa Hopi Youth Center (FMYC)** is located in the First Mesa community of Polacca on the Hopi Reservation in northern Arizona. The FMYC serves Hopi and Tewa youth ages 6 to 18, providing after-school and summer programming. FMYC received PWNA funding through the Walmart Foundation to teach Hopi and Tewa youth the traditional “dry farming” methods and the Hopi way of life. FMYC is establishing a new garden adjacent to the youth center and planting traditional foods as well as other plants. Approximately 50 youth and members of the community are expected to participate in the project.
2. **Ganado Elementary School** is located in the Ganado community of the Navajo Nation in Arizona. In 2013, Ganado Elementary implemented a gardening program called the “Ganado Green Hornets Gardening Club.” The success of the project included staff, students and community working together to build out the fencing and drip system, and plant watermelon, corn, squash, sunflowers, cantaloupes, and flowers. The PWNA project funding through the Walmart Foundation supports the building of a greenhouse to enable an extended planting season. The goal of the project is to teach youth self-reliance. The garden expansion project also includes healthy living training and canning of food for the winter months. The project will serve 6 Navajo communities and 125 participants, the majority youth attending the school.
3. **Mescalero Tribal Human Services (MTHS)** is located on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico. The MTHS operates domestic violence prevention, substance abuse treatment, Indian Child Welfare Act, and the Mescalero Tribal Cessation and Prevention programs. The PWNA project funding provided through the Walmart Foundation is being used to establish a new tool to support substance abuse treatment, prevention of domestic violence and tobacco cessation and prevention services. The MTHS will build a hoop house/green house and establish a community garden. The community garden is a first for MTHS and will support their existing services to tribal members. MTHS will plant food and traditional medicines and use the community garden to engage approximately 200 members served by the agency, as well as members of the local community.
4. **Nalwoodi Denzhone Strength & Beauty Community (NDSBC):** The Strength and Beauty Community program is located on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in San Carlos, Arizona. The NDSBC project purpose is to improve the health and well-being of underserved, high-risk Apache youth through hands-on education in life skills, basic nutrition, agriculture, animal husbandry, and basic small business concepts, and to provide the youth with a better understanding and respect of their Native American heritage, the Apache culture and their land through holistic education, farming, gardening, and animal husbandry. During the course of the 6-month session, 15 youth will learn about and practice 10 gardening, 10 farming, and 10 animal husbandry techniques.

Through hands on education, on-site counseling (both individual and family counseling) for substance abuse, skills development through actual farming, gardening and animal husbandry, on-site GED classes, inspiration through Apache art and language, practicing teamwork and experiencing the fruits of their labor, the participants will have the necessary transformational opportunities to set them up for future success. The project is located on the 80-acre Dripping Springs property in the Gilson Wash district of San Carlos.

5. **Rosebud Boys & Girls Club (RBGC)** is located on the Rosebud Reservation in Mission, South Dakota. RBGC serves youth on the reservation by providing services to increase student academic success and improve healthy lifestyles. The PWNA funding through the Walmart Foundation will support the goals of increasing sustainability and community engagement. The RBGC will establish 2 sites on the reservation for a “garden club,” teaching of healthy living skills, construction of a shed and expansion of an existing gardening project to increase access to fruits and vegetables. The RBGC sites are located in one of the most severely economically distressed areas of South Dakota and access to food is a high priority. The project proposes to impact 150 youth.

6. **Tolani Lake Enterprises, Inc. (TLE)** is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization located in the community of Tolani Lake on the Navajo Nation in Arizona. Incorporated in June 2000, TLE was originally created to be a springboard for economic development in Tolani Lake, Leupp, Birdsprings, and surrounding areas. Over the past several years, TLE strengthened its efforts to improve food security, helping area communities move toward food sovereignty by building local capacity and engaging as many Navajo youth and families as possible to grow more and healthier food in their communities. Their objective is enhancing the TLE Demonstration Garden engaging community members and youth in hands-on workshops and workdays led by the Green Team. PWNA’s grant utilizing the Walmart Foundation funding will allow TLE to install passive and active ventilation systems (security screen doors, fans and hydraulic vent opening systems) to cool the existing 90 x 20 foot hoop house for summer growing; build three new 10 x 4 outdoor garden beds with season extenders (hoop and fabric) and drip irrigation systems; install barriers to protect the growing beds from rodents, dogs and livestock; and design and assemble a portable solar pump and panel system to expand our water-harvesting capacity by pumping harvested water from the water tanks adjacent to the roof catchment to additional storage on the high corner of the property. These activities will be integrated into three hands-on workshops open to as many area community members as are interested in participating. TLE is also conducting weekly work sessions throughout the project period, engaging local youth participating in summer and after school programs. Participation is open to all community members. Over the six-month project period, it is estimated that 60 to 120 people will participate.

Learn more about PWNA's [community investment projects](#), and other long-term solutions such as its [capacity building](#) service for personal and professional development, or its scholarships and [higher education](#) services.

About Partnership With Native Americans:

Partnership With Native Americans (PWNA) is a nonprofit organization committed to championing hope for a brighter future for Native Americans living on remote, geographically isolated and often impoverished reservations. The organization collaborates with its reservation partners to serve immediate needs and support long-term solutions for strong, self-sufficient Native American communities. Established in 1990, PWNA works through its grassroots partnerships and distribution network to improve the lives of 250,000 Native Americans each year. For more information follow up on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), or visit our website www.nativepartnership.org.

Media Contact:

Helen Oliff
Public Relations Manager
holiff@nativepartnership.org
(540) 825-5950 x205

