

Training Emerging Leaders

Partnership With Native Americans (PWNA) recognizes that leadership development is a critical step toward our vision of strong, self-sufficient Native American communities -- and central to championing hope for a brighter future in the impoverished reservation communities we serve.



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PWNA's 4 Directions Development (4D) service builds capacity and enhances the personal and professional effectiveness of grassroots leaders who are serving Native American communities. 4D is really an investment in those who want to make a greater contribution to their tribal communities.



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PWNA designed the 4D service based on direct feedback from reservation partners. The result is that 4 Directions is unlike any training offered in Indian country. Available in the Northern Plains and the Southwest, 4D is delivered in small but intensive cohorts for optimal learning. Emerging tribal leaders undergo a six-month experience of personal and professional development and work with PWNA staff and an advisor-mentor to reach self-identified goals.

PWNA caught up with a couple of participants from the first cohort, who admitted the 4D process profoundly affected them. Nominees apply for 4D and PWNA vets them against a set of selection

criterion and so, as plans unveiled and details emerged in the first cohort, Jaime realized, “We are important” to have been selected for this new journey. “

Jaime and Guenevere (Guena) work in the Crow Agency Family Preservation program in southeastern Montana. Openly sharing, they unanimously agreed the greatest challenge in 4D was speaking before the group. Guena lamented, “I didn’t have any public speaking skills. It’s hard for me — really hard for me.” True to its purpose, the 4D curriculum moved her out of her comfort zone and into a space where talking to and within the group was a common thread woven throughout all the sessions.

In one session, participants were asked to bring business cards, introduce themselves and “sell” themselves as a resource to various people in the cohort. This “networking” session was led by a successful, articulate and enthusiastic Native American attorney and Jaime said, “Of all of the people I had to speak to, I got the presenter and that made it even harder” – but she did it.

During the closing ceremony, Jamie’s PowerPoint pictured descendants, chiefs and leaders in her family and tribe, a strong historical backdrop for the group. Both women received a certificate of completion from their 4D advisors and PWNA staff and concluded, “4D made us feel important. They just looked at us in a different way. They appreciated us and built up our confidence.” Their tagline for the next cohort is “get out of your comfort zone!”



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First 4D cohort celebrates their individual and collective success

To learn more about 4D and Partnership With Native Americans, visit www.nativepartnership.org.