

First Nations Development Institute Announces Awarding of \$687,900 in Grant Funding



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Press Release Summary = **Today, First Nations Development Institute (First Nations) announced that it has awarded \$687,900 in grants to Indian Country since March of 2007. Through a three-pronged strategy of Educating Grassroots Practitioners, Advocating Systemic Change, and Capitalizing Indian Communities, First Nations is working to restore Native control and culturally-compatible stewardship of the assets they own - be they land, human potential, cultural heritage, or natural resources - and to establish new assets for ensuring the long-term vitality of Native communities.**

Press Release Body = August 2, 2007 — LONGMONT, COLORADO — **First Nations Development Institute** Announces Awarding of \$687,900 in Grant Funding.

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Capitalizing Indian Communities, **First Nations** is working to restore Native control and culturally-compatible stewardship of the assets they own - be they land, human potential, cultural heritage, or natural resources - and to establish new assets for ensuring the long-term vitality of Native communities.

According to **Michael E. Roberts, president of First Nations**, *"our most recent round of grants demonstrates First Nations' commitment to invest in early stage social change projects in reservation communities."* Roberts further explains that *"through strategic grantmaking at First Nations, funding is placed directly into the hands of community practitioners allowing them to design the programs and the make the decisions that will positively affect the lives of their communities."* In this way, **First Nations** acts as a vehicle to get funding to Indian Country while allowing Native peoples the opportunity to manage and control their own programs.

"First Nations' strategic intent has always been to be a leader in empowering and training Indian leaders and Indian people in their ability to control their assets by investing in Indian Country's most innovative strategies around control of assets and wealth creation and retention," explains Roberts. "With these most recent investments, we are once again demonstrating a commitment and grantmaking philosophy that are unique both within and outside of Indian country."

Through its grantmaking program, the **Eagle Staff Fund, First Nations** provides culturally compatible financial and technical resources to tribes and Native non-profit organizations to increase sustainable asset-based development projects and programs. General funding provides seed capital for innovative models for training and assistance for culturally appropriate economic development that utilizes asset-based strategies. **First Nations** has six additional grant initiatives within its grantmaking program.

The Native Nonprofit Capacity Building Initiative increases institutional capacity and strength through organization capacity assessment and funding-specific projects around organizational sustainability and constituent service.

The Native Youth and Culture Fund Initiative partners with tribes and Native nonprofits seeking to utilize, retain and increase Native culture and tradition among Native youth.

The Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative, with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, increases Native control over agriculture and food systems, and promotes public policies that support the Native agriculture and food sectors.

The Leadership and Entrepreneurial Apprenticeship Development Program Initiative is an educational program that utilizes the talents within Native communities by providing Native undergraduate and graduate students or current nonprofit staff with hands-on experience in nonprofit businesses through apprenticeships hosted by reservation-based nonprofit organizations.

The Native American Asset Watch Initiative partners with tribes and Native communities to create strategies for economic improvement, the protection and revitalization of traditional and environmental resources, and to identify and address legislative and regulatory barriers to effective Native environmental protection and preservation.

The Little Eagle Staff Fund focuses on general operational needs and developing loan loss reserves for emerging community development finance institutions located on reservations or within Native rural communities.

To learn more about **First Nations Development Institute's** grantmaking program, please visit our website at: www.firstnations.org or contact **Kimberly Craven, Director of Grantmaking**, at (303) 774-7836.

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