

Partnership Update

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Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Realizes Another Benefit of NCCI Training

Halfway House and Veteran's Building are Used as Practical Class Projects

By Pat Smutz, Communications Director, NW LECET

EAGLE BUTTE, SD -- Another onsite partnership class is underway, and this time it is on the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's reservation. Trainees are learning remodeling, rehabilitation and renovation skills in a 300 hour training program that will incur major improvements to a Halfway House and a Veteran's building.



NCCI Instructor Dan St. John, a tribal member of the Osage Nation of Oklahoma, helps a trainee to use a table saw to rip lumber safely.

"We have brought the NCCI partnership model to a level that increases the chance for the individual's success in getting into a sustainable construction career dramatically" said Conrad Edwards, CEO of the Council for Tribal Employment Rights (CTER) and Co-Founder of NCCI. "The need for this type of training is out there on almost all reservations, and when a tribal government passes a resolution stating it wants NCCI, CTER, and LIUNA, or another construction union, to help them attack their unemployment we're there for them."

The first of the three 100-hour training modules, will be focused on the men's halfway house and the second and third modules will concentrate on doing a major renovation on the tribes Veteran's building.

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Cheyenne River Tribe trainees gather in front of NCCI's mobile training unit at the class practical project site

Blackfeet Tribe Sponsors 5 Laborers-AGC Training Modules

LIUNA Brings Industry Standard Training for Commercial Projects in Tribe's Area

BROWNING, MT -- The Blackfeet tribe is positioning itself to have qualified construction workers for the work that is planned and underway in the Browning area of Montana. Road, bridge, water, sewer and even huge wind power development projects are just some of the job-laden opportunities that the Blackfeet Nation is aiming to capture for their unemployed tribal members.

Under the direction of the Blackfeet Manpower office's George Kipp IV and Dan McFadyean, the training effort is a partnership with the Montana Laborers Union (LIUNA). The Laborers-AGC certified training insures

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Blackfeet Training:

Providing skills for a career in construction on and near their reservation

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there will be locally-hired people working on projects on and near their reservation.

Using NCCI's onsite assistance and their proven partnership model, 15 tribal members are being trained in each class on the reservation using practical projects for the trainees to build their skills on. Concrete Placement and Pipelaying classes, being determined to be not only some of the most in-demand skills, but also being the type of skilled work that pays very well and often includes health and pensions benefits when individuals are hired by certain contractors. A couple of the projects scheduled to date include pouring a floor for the tribe's Housing Department warehouse and laying 700 feet of water and sewer lines on the reservation.

"This program will get a number of people ready for not only work that is always ongoing inside the reservation, but also for those who want to work on the big commercial projects that a spring up near the reservations" said Warren Smeltzer, Training Director for the Montana Laborers-AGC Training arm. "The tribe has been wonderful to work with. We have a lot of respect for each other."

The Montana Laborers Union Local 1686 has been praised for having tribal sovereignty honoring language in the union's master construction agreements with their signatory contractors.

"We have TERO clauses in our contracts which provide tribal members with opportunities to work on projects that they may not have had the chance to enjoy" stated Kim Rickard, Business Manager for the Montana Laborers Union, at an exploratory presentation to tribal manpower and training officials earlier in the year. "With our training, we can certify them to do the work our contractors perform, and once a contractor experiences the kind of skill and effort they bring to the job they can be requested by name on any other project that particular contractor is building."

It isn't the first time the Laborers' Union brought training to the Blackfeet Nation. Their training arm has been there before.

"The Laborers have done training for the Blackfeet before and I know that is why they are back on the reservation doing more" said Ed Hensley, the LIUNA North America Native Liaison. "We can deliver training onsite and customize it to their needs and schedules. The Montana Laborers' Union has a number of Blackfeet Tribal members amongst their ranks and when they work on a project through the union they get great wages and benefits for their families. It's a win-win-win situation."

Funding for the training is coming from a number of sources including the Montana State Wired Program and the Department of the Interior.

Cheyenne River Sioux: Class practical projects abound

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The tribe is supplying all the materials and supplies for the class practical projects.

"We always have to have a practical project for the class and believe me when I tell you that there is never a shortage of projects that need to be done on any reservation" said Kevin Buckles the NCCI/CTER Field coordinator. "I always tell the tribe that we can do a number of things but we have to be creative in coming up with the training money and the construction materials and supplies. When it comes to federal training dollars, you can't always go back to the same well so we're looking elsewhere and we're finding it."