

Partnership Update

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NCCI Entrepreneurship Program Gains Acclaim in Spirit Lake Tribal Members Learn the Inside Story on Construction Contracting

By Pat Smutz, Communications Director, NW LECET

SPIRIT LAKE, ND -- Twelve Tribal members from the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation recently graduated from the new Native Construction Careers Initiative's (NCCI) Contractor Entrepreneurship Program, a 200 hour practical study of the inside workings of being a construction contractor. The individuals were trained by one of NCCI's General Contractors/Training Consultants in subjects such as Project Assessment, Contractor Ethics, Bidding Projects, Code Compliance, Safety, TERO and Housing Requirements, and much more.

The program has become the proverbial frosting on the cake when added on the back end of NCCI's Remodel, Renovation and Building Rehabilitation program, a 300 Hour course. Graduation in that course, or an equivalent

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"You are now able to provide more for your families, and to help your people, and we need it."

***Myra Pearson
Tribal Council Chair
Spirit Lake
Dakotah Nation***



NCCI Entrepreneurship Program Graduate Myron Greybear, receives his certificate and congratulations from Tribal Leaders and NCCI Staff. Class-built Tribal Council desk behind group was one of the practical contractor exercises.

Indian Country Energy and Conservation Targeted in ARRA

NCCI Weatherization Training Program Planned from Alaska to Western NY

With billions of stimulus money devoted to sustainable energy development, alternate energy, conservation and weatherization assistance, it is a very notable piece of Indian Country's portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). With the Obama administration's strong resolve for all of the above, money being spent on energy conservation is going to do more for the country's tribal communities than just save them money on energy, it is going to provide jobs and training opportunities that will further fuel their local economies with long-term career prospects for tribal members.

Responding to requests from tribes to provide training for the massive Weatherization Assistance Program, the Native

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NCCI Programs Inspire \$4 Million in Extra Stimulus Training Money for Tribes

DOI Indian Energy and Economic Development Office Continues with NCCI Partnership Training Approach

Thanks to the success of a demonstration program selected by the Public Law 102-477 program of the US Department of the Interior, the Stimulus Bill passed by congress included an extra \$4 million to continue training tribal members and putting 90% of the participants to work in construction. Adding to the call for action on helping end the massive unemployment on Indian Reservations, the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) lent considerable lobbying power before Congress to help make the appropriation possible.

The Native Construction Careers Initiative (NCCI) partnership between the Council for Tribal Employment Rights (CTER), LIUNA and its market development arm LECET, put together the original demonstration project with amazing results. It was used as a model before congressional leaders and staff to provide a system of training for tribal members to gain access to careers in construction. A major reason for the program's popularity in Indian Country and in Congress,

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PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

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STIMULUS TRAINING: Indian Country has opportunity to gain training and infrastructure

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is the fact that Individuals are trained on site at their reservation. The NCCI and union trainers setup at the reservation in coordination with the affected tribal agencies.

“The NCCI program has been such a success that shows that tribes can work with construction unions for mutual benefit” said Dan Press, General Counsel for CTER. “The partnership approach works, and now it will get a chance to prove it can put tribal members to work in the Stimulus program by training on site at the reservations.”

Targeting residential, light commercial and commercial projects on Indian reservations, the effort to form tribal/labor partnerships has also utilized union resources. A number of LIUNA’s mobile training units have demonstrated with the Blackfeet and Spirit Lake tribes that they can provide commercial-grade training in Pipelaying and Concrete Placement onsite at the reservation.

“With the amount of infrastructure development, such as sanitation and clean water that will be done on reservations under the stimulus bill and the FY 2010 budget, there are not enough pipelayers trained in those areas to fill the need” commented NCCI Co-Founder Ed Hensley during one of his trips to Washington

DC to promote the NCCI partnership. “There’s always going to be a need for pipelayers on and off the reservation. It’s driven by the need for better sanitation and clean water, and that need is growing constantly.”

The areas that will be funded first through the new stimulus money will be centered around the NCCI and Laborers Union programs including remodeling, renovation, concrete placement, pipelaying, road infrastructure, geothermal development, and a number of other career paths.

“We have a definite winner here in this program, and with the extra resources my office can bring to the picture, we will be able to maximize both employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for Native Americans” commented Bob Middleton, Director of the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, Office of Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs.

ENTREPRENEUR: NCCI is bringing contractor savvy to those looking to startup in construction

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amount of experience was a prerequisite for all of the trainees in the Entrepreneur Program.

“Learning the basics of being a contractor isn’t as easy as having a pickup truck and a wheelbarrow, you have to be thinking ahead all of the time” Said NCCI Co-Founder, Ed Hensley recently on a visit to the Spirit Lake training program. “The students we had in this class learned a lot about construction from management’s perspective. Whatever they decide to do with their new knowledge of the industry, they will certainly be more valuable to a contractor or go on to excel in their own business.”

In commending the graduates on their efforts to improve themselves and make a difference for their fellow tribal members, the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation Chairwoman said “You are now able to provide more for your families, and to help your people, and we need it.”

Kyle Robertson, one of the program graduates, stated recently in an essay required by the course: I was proud of what we accomplished. I was most of all proud of myself for staying focused on finishing the program, not only that, but I also believe that I’ve got what it takes to be successful in this field.

Kevin Buckles, the NCCI Field Coordinator who serves as the main guy on the ground during the training project’s planning and initial implementation phases, added words of encouragement to the graduates when he said “I have seen some incredible teamwork here and a lot of growth. I want everyone to know that we produced an excellent class of graduates who are now more employable and self-employable than ever before.”

WEATHERIZATION: Training Trainers to Cover the Need for Energy Auditors

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Construction Careers Initiative (NCCI) has developed a two phase approach to ensuring the jobs created go to those who live on the reservations. The first phase is a training of trainers component where Weatherization Auditors are trained to train more auditors.

“Reducing the use of fossil fuels and reducing carbon is not only good for the earth by providing more efficient homes for Native Americans, but the small businesses and jobs that will be created are our main targets” said NCCI Co-Founder Conrad Edwards. “Training the trainers is the key to our new program. We need to deploy rapidly and train enough of our people to meet the upcoming workplace and labor force demands in reservation weatherization.”

Throughout Indian Country many of the buildings within reservation boundaries are perfect targets for weatherization and energy conservation measures. Housing is one of the most important elements of the stimulus package and 2010 budget for Indian Housing Authorities. The NCCI weatherization program will start up with two programs in rural Alaska villages and implement similar programs in eastern, mid west, and western tribes.

CHANGING LIVES



BUILDING FUTURES