

Oglala Lakota College

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COLLEGE PRESIDENT
THOMAS H. SHORTBULL

BOARD CHAIRMAN
NEWTON CUMMINGS

May 30, 2014

Dear Chamber Member,

Oglala Lakota College has embarked on an exciting project that involves many partners, provides hands-on education for our construction trades students, and meets serious needs on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. We are asking you to assist with either monetary or materials donations to help us finish two projects that our students are currently working on. One is a demonstration, energy efficient straw bale house and another is a house to be donated to Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Housing to help alleviate the housing shortage on the Reservation.

I was excited and honored that we were one of five tribal colleges to receive an Innovation award from the American Indian College Fund and the Northwest Area Foundation recognizing our civic engagement program involving our students. The award could not have come at a better time due to cutbacks in federal funds.

We attended a presentation at our Piya Wiconi Headquarters about three years ago of the United Nations Reporteur on Housing, who commented that the housing conditions on the Pine Ridge Reservation are worse than some third world countries. We also began looking for civic engagement projects based on a presentation at a HUD conference on what the University of Southern California is doing to improve their surrounding neighborhoods. We initiated youth recreation programs and contacted Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Housing to ask how we could help. We built three houses and have not asked for outside funds until now. Federal funding cuts and the needs of our over 1,600 students impel us to ask for assistance at this time.

Our *Oyate Kici Kaga* (Building for the People) project began a couple of years ago by providing houses to Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Housing (OSLH). The Tribe had asked OSLH for houses to be used as safe houses for children. Three schools on the Reservation provided sites and the Tribe was to provide operational funds. The OLC students built the houses and OSLH placed the houses. The houses are at Little Wound School in Kyle, Loneman School in Oglala and Pahin Sinte Owayawa in Porcupine.

Last Spring there was a crisis with the Porcupine Senior Center being condemned due to damage and age. Paul Iron Cloud of OSLH called me and our students immediately began working on renovating the Center. It reopened in August 2013 and the students completed a new roof and other upgrades in April.

A current project is an energy efficient straw-bale insulated house in conjunction with the Native American Sustainable Housing Initiative, University of Colorado, SD School of Mines and Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation. We have provided and are providing faculty and student labor and some materials costs to finish the house by the end of June. We have attached a list of items we need for the house that those of you who are vendors might consider donating.

CHARTERED BY OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE

ACCREDITED BY THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION OF THE NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

We are also in need of funds for materials and further stipends for our students for Donated House #4 that will also be given to OSLH. Our Native American Vocational and Technical Education Programs were cut by \$100,000 this year and we have had an increase in students in our automotive and plumbing programs. Donations of cash would go toward stipends and materials so the students could continue work on the house in the Fall.

I will not list all the statistics about the needs of the Reservation. You have probably heard that we are the 3rd poorest area in America (US Census Report 2013) and have a need for 2,451 houses (HUD, 2013). I will tell you that *Oyate Kaga Kici* is a great example of people on the Pine Ridge Reservation helping each other. We invite you to participate in a nationally recognized program that brings together people and organizations from on and off the Reservation to meet real needs.

If you would like further information on the program you can call Marilyn Pourier, Development Director, or Andy Thompson, Vocational Education at 605-455-6000. If you would like to speak to me directly or meet in Rapid City call me at 605-455-6020. I would be willing to answer your questions.

If you wish to donate to OLC's Civic Engagement Program we have enclosed a postage guaranteed envelope for your convenience. Please make check payable to Oglala Lakota College/OKK Program. Oglala Lakota College is a 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas Shortbull,
President

Items needed for Straw Bale House:

Kitchen Range Kenmore 94149
Range Hood Yosemite MIPH365-4H
Dishwasher Kenmore 13293
Microwave: Whirlpool WMH31017AB
Refrigerator Kenmore 78893
Bathroom Sink American Standard 0247.444EC 020
Tub American Standard 0255.212
Tub Surround: Swanstone GN 58.010
Water Heater Whirlpool ES50R123-45D
Minisplit Senville 24000 Aure Series