

**FY2022 NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANT****Santa Clara Pueblo Library****Narrative****Justification**

The Santa Clara Pueblo, "Kha-Po" (Valley of Wild Roses) is one of the Eight Northern Pueblos located in New Mexico and is part of the Tewa Pueblo language groups. Tewa oral history tells of an emergence of the Tewa to the north, in the Mesa Verde-Chaco area. The Tewa moved south over time and occupied large regions of present-day New Mexico in many villages along the Rio Grande River. Each of the villages remained independent of each other, operating as separate tribes with similar cultures. The Santa Clara people trace their ancestors to many prehistoric villages and cliff dwellings west of the current village. The current Santa Clara Pueblo was established sometime between the late 1300s and early 1400s and up until the 1960s Pueblo members were centralized around the old Pueblo. The village is located 25 miles north of the state capital of Santa Fe on the west bank of the Rio Grande River. The current tribal enrollment is approximately 1,800 members.

In 1978, the Community Library was established in the Tribal Administration Building, giving Pueblo members central access to the Library's resources. The population of Santa Clara Pueblo reflects approximately 820 people. This is a decline from the previous census data. The median age of a community member is 36 years of age. The median age is at a <1% decline reported from the previous census data. The median household income has increased from \$28,214 to \$38,529 a 33.6% increase. Between 2018 and 2022 the population of Santa Clara Pueblo has decreased from 967 to 820, a 15.2% decrease. The population of Santa Clara Pueblo is 77.2% Native, 12.7% Hispanic, and 10.1% Other. 59.4% of the people in Santa Clara Pueblo speak a non-English, heritage language. The Santa Clara Pueblo workforce is recorded as 268 community members and reflects a decrease of 22.3%. 89% of the Santa Clara Pueblo community members have obtained an education or are currently enrolled in an education institution between pre-school and adult ages.

The Santa Clara Pueblo Community Library's Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Enhancement Grant will assist our community by offering an opportunity to *Strengthen Community Engagement*. The Enhancement Grant will also assist us in collaborating with tribal community programs to effectively respond and demonstrate resilience and recovery of our community in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our identified goal and objectives will enable us to facilitate activities where children and adults in our community are encouraged and inspired to increase their participation in library activities that represent their needs with positive learning outcomes. We believe that our proposal will be unique and responsive to IMLS' *Strengthening Community Engagement* and our project goal is to improve educational programs related to specific topics and content areas of interest to library patrons and community-based users.

The Santa Clara Pueblo community have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The impacts can be seen and experienced through COVID-related deaths and illnesses, isolation, living in fear and stress, and students learning loss, to name a few. The community has not fully returned to pre-pandemic operations and our community population numbers are declining, and for various reasons. As with other library systems throughout the country, we have had to modify our services to the community and implement a variety of COVID-safe practices. In doing so, we have not been able to fulfill individual community members needs through interactive library services as offered before the pandemic. The Library is the community hub for learning, socialization, and digital connection beyond the reservation boundaries. Our need is to develop, implement, and sustain community-based services within the Library that will effectively respond to the impact COVID-19 has had on our community.

We believe that our role, moving forward is to 1) support the identification of the needs and interests of learners, 2) support the development and implementation of classes, events, teaching tools, resources, and other educational services, and 3) support the evaluative assessment of library-based approaches to teaching and facilitation. The aforementioned are reflective of IMLS' objectives and our identified project goal.

The State of New Mexico education system has been tasked with effectively responding to a statewide mandate to provide create culturally responsive practices that increase Native American students educational success. Throughout the last several years, the tribal library systems have been increasingly recognized as an integral part of the community and an effective resource for learning spaces and access to services. Due to COVID-19, we have been limited in engaging our students and addressing community needs.

Examples of community needs we have been able to assist patrons with in the past include 1) offering space 2) access to technology for learning and to complete employment applications, 3) access to books and online resources, and 4) connecting to education and training events, to name a few. The inability to support learning spaces and workforce expansion and access to additional resources in the community is due to our tribal government mandates to cease in-person services and encourage no-contact options. Such measures were established and implemented for the health and safety of our community.

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The Library recognizes that COVID-safe practices, state and local health mandates, and social issues have impacted our way of life. We have selected a few areas that can be addressed through the library to reinvigorate learning and whole health wellness using our cultural tools and space.

Recent reports over the last year have indicated a need to address mental health issues related to COVID-19. A New Mexico Voices for Children data sheet indicated that the following in response to COVID and effects on mental health:

*40% of New Mexican adults with children in the home felt anxious, stressed, or on edge nearly every day – or more often than not – over the past week. Children and parents are experiencing increased anxiety due to school and child-care closures from the pandemic, as well as isolation and other concerns.*

The same fact sheet also described a technology gap for school-aged children who were immersed in on-line learning with no access to technology, which resulted in a digital divide. The implications of COVID-19 will have a long-lasting effect on our community. As near an endemic stage of COVID-19, we are struggling to achieve normalcy but we are optimistic and have proven to be a resilient community.

As reported above, the employment rate had a significant decline of over 22% in the last year. Employment seekers may have limited options for employment due to skills, education, and location. Issues such as these can affect mental health and perpetuate additional problems for employment seekers. We believe that we can help our community members by developing and offering self-help activities that can assist in their wellbeing using community resources and cultural approaches.

Our project effort to *strengthen community engagement* will assist the target groups as follows 1) pre-school to secondary grades, and 2) adults (18 years old and up). We believe that learning occurs at all ages. We will establish a cohort of 15 pre-school and secondary students. We will establish a cohort of 10 adults. Establishing cohorts will serve two purposes: 1) consistent evaluation of project impact and outcomes, and 2) continuity in project development and implementation.

The beneficiaries of this project are the Santa Clara Pueblo community. The ability to enhance the lives of our community through our library services is important. We can create unique cultural learning spaces to address social-emotional learning, promote self-sufficiency, and re-establish our role as the community hub.

#### **Project Work Plan**

This project will address participant needs by taking a holistic approach to learning and combining an Indigenous and Montessori approach to learning and activities. As a Pueblo, our learning environment has included everything around us and within a worldview context. Generational stories, teachings, and practices have continuously reflected our ability to adapt various epistemologies and learning styles for enhanced education. We will develop and implement adult and student activities that effectively respond to a variety of needs, using a whole health wellness approach. The following are the goal, objectives, and activities we will establish for our project's success.

*Goal:* Improve educational programs related to specific topics and content areas of interest to library patrons and community-based users.

Objective 1: Support the identification of the needs and interests of learners.

Activity 1 – We will create one assessment a tool for both target groups that include questions and statements that inquire about their perception of COVID-19, overcoming a pandemic, learning and support needs that can be addressed through the library, and other relevant topics. Information will be collected, analyzed, and categorized for project use. The intent of the assessment is to implement a data driven approach to ensure a successful project outcome.

Objective 2: Support the development and implementation of classes, events, teaching tools, resources, and other educational services.

Activity 2 – We will then identify community stakeholders and develop monthly roundtable discussions. Stakeholders should include education leaders, human resources (personnel), tribal leaders, mental health, health care, criminal justice, community college, family advocates, senior services, child protective services, community planners, environmental services, and community members. Stakeholder participation in roundtable discussions will identify community resources that serve the project's target population. Discussions will also include identifying target population needs and service gaps. This activity will be continuous and evaluated. A team of stakeholders will be a contributing factor to sustaining activities after funding has ended. Stakeholders from the professions are already subject matter experts in their field of work and can assist to ensure that cohort needs are being met.

Activity 3 – The library staff will collaborate with tribal programs to identify at least 4 safe outdoor learning spaces within the reservation. Priority learning spaces will reflect historical landmarks and accessibility to the target groups. This will ease transportation burdens while capturing natural landscapes that reduce stress, acknowledge tribal lands, and stimulate positive thinking, to name a few. This portion of the project will amplify Montessori's supportive learning environment and Indigenous method of knowledge acquisition.

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Activity 4 – The library staff will plan and implement 12 activities that are a combination of Montessori and Indigenous approaches to learning for students and adults focused on their identified needs. This combined approach to learning will also be based on academic subjects and social-emotional wellness. Learning spaces for academics and wellness will take place outside, in selected areas and using large tables and chairs. Some activities will focus on science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM). STEAM activities in learning spaces will assist students in inquiry, discussion, and problem-solving. An outdoor learning environment is representative of the combined learning approaches and will promote supportive learning environments, culturally-based Indigenous pedagogy, and self-guided learning.

Other benefits of this activity are our response to students learning loss during the pandemic and re-engaging students. Students who fell behind in learning and experienced technology gaps and other interferences can be immersed in an environment that will benefit their academic growth.

Activity 5 – 4 community volunteers will be recruited to facilitate activities for each target group using genre selected by cohort members. Activities will be scheduled in the outdoor learning spaces. will be encouraged to use sketch pads to create drawings or write. The activities are intended to be fun and healing. A calendar of events will be developed by staff, as well as locations.

Activity 6 – Activities focused on the adult group, will include 10 skills-based and self-help discussions revealed by the assessment. Discussions will be guided by stakeholders or other experts in their field, to help improve outreach and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The library has been a great source for community members to access technology and online resources for employment opportunities, skills-based training, and other supports. We believe that using our current resources via the stakeholders, can provide direct and immediate support and information of what is available in the community.

Objective 3: Support the evaluative assessment of library-based approaches to teaching and facilitation.

Activity 7 – The project will undergo 1 process evaluation in the fourth quarter of the first year. This evaluation type will help us to determine if the methods and structure that have been put in place are actually working and/or if we need to adjust activities to ensure project success. The proposed activities are conceptualized to be adapted in a non-traditional learning environment, address post-COVID social emotional issues, and revert back to natural environments that reflective of Indigenous methods. If such, methods need to be restructured – the process evaluation will reveal such findings.

Activity 8 – The project will undergo 1 impact evaluation and will begin at the end of the third quarter of the second year. The impact evaluation will be used to determine if the project and its activities had an impact on the cohorts. The report will be developed in preparation for activity 9.

Activity 9 – A final community report will be developed and contain the project goal, objectives, and activities. Data from the impact evaluation will be summarized and included in the report. An electronic copy will be available on the library website, in paper form, and a virtual presentation take place for community viewing. We believe it is important for us to have continued communication with the community and share activities and outcomes to generate interest and increase patron numbers.

#### *Performance Measures*

The following are the identified performance measures for this project:

#### Effectiveness

- At the beginning of the project, and within the 1st quarter of year 1, an assessment tool will be developed for the two target groups to identify needs and expectations.
- At the end of the 1st year, a process evaluation will be conducted to determine how well the project is working, if it is working, and determine if any changes need to be made.
- At the end of the project year, and within the last quarter, an impact evaluation will be conducted to determine if the project was successful in addressing the target group needs.

#### Quality

- At the end of each activity, an evaluation will be provided to participants to determine if learning objectives were met.
- At the end of each year, an evaluation will be provided to stakeholders to gauge their satisfaction with the project and activities.

#### Timeliness

- At the end of each month, the Librarian will meet with staff to discuss and assess project activities completed.

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- At the beginning of each month, the staff will develop announcements for cohorts, stakeholders, and community members to announce activities and meetings.
- At the end of each month, staff will collect cohort numbers participating in activities to determine if the outreach is effective.
- At the beginning of each stakeholder meeting, sign-in sheets will be collected, and agendas shared to document meetings and attendance.
- At end of each month, the Librarian will assess the budget to determine needs and on-track spending.

#### *Communication Plan*

A communication plan will be developed for this project and will include four components that include 1) measure the scope of our communications, 2) evaluate the current and past communications, 3) consultation with stakeholders, and 4) an analysis of strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT).

Measure the scope of our communications involves taking an inventory of what and how we communicate with the community. This is important to the project to help us determine if we are using the right methods to recruit, inform, and strengthen our services to the community.

Evaluate the current and past communications is something necessary to help us focus on what types of communications material are distributed and assess trends, successes, and challenges. The overall communication practices within the library have included social media, email, and flyers, to name a few. However, social media and emails can be difficult for some community members to access if they have no internet/Wi-Fi connections or devices. Also, the reservation has some remote areas where community members are housed which can be challenging in getting our flyers and other materials to them. We will take some time throughout the project to assess who are target audience is, the methods that work best for areas of the community and ensure communication is clear about the project.

Consult everyone involved in our communications. Everyone who interacts with us has a role to play in our communications, including our staff members, patrons, and stakeholders. We will ask these groups how effective they think our communications are and what they believe we can do better. We will get this feedback through a survey, interview, or quick email.

We will perform an analysis of strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT). A SWOT analysis will help us identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in our communications. Possible questions we can pose are: 1) Where do we succeed in our communication and outreach, 2) where we have challenges in communications, 3) what factors could help our communications, and 4) what factors could limit our communication and outreach.

The overall, communication plan will be necessary in our efforts to complete an impact evaluation and community report. We want to achieve a sustainable program that can be embedded in our regular operations so that community members can expect consistent activities and we can increase the number of library patrons and visits.

#### **Project Results**

The intended results of this project are to have developed and implemented outdoor learning spaces for both target populations. The learning spaces will be reflective of a combined Montessori and Indigenous approach to learning and activities will respond to learning loss. We intend that these approaches will increase our students' academic progress and positive outcomes. Most educational settings are reflective of traditional, institutional settings. During COVID and now entering an endemic stage, we want to take the opportunity to immerse the cohort members in a natural, outdoor environment within our reservation.

An outdoor learning space with various activities can help respond to students' educational needs, learning loss and social emotional needs. The same environment can be stated for adults who will be a part of our activities.

The tribal leadership have mandated contactless services for safety purposes, but this has also triggered mental health issues such as isolation, depression, and anxiety, to name a few. Employment opportunities have also declined but we believe that gathering stakeholders and discussing community needs and a strategy to address those needs will help our community recover. Recovery will be in the form of cohort members ability to develop or refresh employment skills, increase academic success, address mental health needs, and increase our community's resilience. The results for the library will be its continued services, demonstrated progress, and data driven practices.

#### **References**

New Mexico Voices for Children. (n.d.). *The Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Well-Being in New Mexico.*

[rethttps://www.nmvoices.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/09/ChildWellBeingCOVID-web.pdf](https://www.nmvoices.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/09/ChildWellBeingCOVID-web.pdf)

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<b>Project Activities</b>	<b>Year 1 Quarter 1</b>	<b>Year 1 Quarter 2</b>	<b>Year 1 Quarter 3</b>	<b>Year 1 Quarter 4</b>	<b>Year 2 Quarter 1</b>	<b>Year 2 Quarter 2</b>	<b>Year 2 Quarter 3</b>	<b>Year 2 Quarter 4</b>
Activity #1	X							
Activity #2	X	X						
Activity #3		X	X					
Activity #4			X	X	X	X	X	
Activity #5			X	X	X	X	X	
Activity #6			X	X	X	X	X	
Activity #7				X				
Activity #8							X	X
Activity #9								X