Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (Red Lake Nation)
Medweganoonind Library

Narrative

Project Justification

Medweganoonind Library serves the Red Lake Nation on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota. The Reservation covers 825,654 acres (or 1,259 square miles.) (MN Indian Affairs Council, 2021) The Red Lake Nation has over 16,000 enrolled members with approximately half living on the Reservation. The population on the Reservation is very young and very poor. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's *2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*, nearly half of those living on the Reservation are under the age of 20. Unemployment is about 28% and only 75% of those over the age of 25 have a high school diploma. 35% of children between the ages of 0 and 17 live below the poverty line. (CNMP, 2017.)

The Medweganoonind Library is located within Red Lake Nation College (RLNC) and is a joint-use facility, serving as both college academic and public library. Its physical collection consists of around 12,000 items. It has no digital library collection.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the library was forced to close its doors to the public. Community members were completely cut off from physical library materials. Public library use came to a complete standstill. Unfortunately, library access was an issue even before the pandemic hit. Many who live on the Reservation are unable to visit the library in-person due to mobility issues, lack of transportation, and/or because of Northern Minnesota's extreme, often sub-zero temperatures and inclement weather.

A public library that cannot reach the public, cannot fulfill its purpose.

Therefore, the purpose of this project is to establish a digital library collection that will provide access to digital content (eBooks and eAudiobooks) in a wide range of subjects to those who are unable to visit the Medweganoonind Library in-person for any reason, and to expand library services and provide added convenience to those who prefer digital formats. The project will include an eReader lending program to serve those who do not have a computer, mobile device, or internet service in their home. Library staff can pre-load the individual's selections onto the devices for checkout prior to regular or curbside pickup and train new users to use the devices. These new resources will enable the Medweganoonind Library to reach the public, even when its physical doors are closed, and better fulfill its mission and vision.

This project aligns with the IMLS Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Goal 1: Improve digital services to support needs for education, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, and digital literacy skills, and Objective 1.1 Support the establishment and refinement of digital infrastructure, platforms, and technology.

Project Work Plan

The Interim Library Director, Tammi Jalowiec, will be the Project Director. She will plan, implement, and manage the entire project. She has over a decade of experience managing libraries -- seven years as a branch librarian for a public library, and over three years as a Tribal College Librarian. The public library she worked for began a large digital collection during her time there, and she is a highly experienced user of digital content. Ms. Jalowiec believes strongly that a digital collection is a must for any modern library.

Work Plan Summary:
- The library will offer a digital collection consisting of eBooks and eAudiobooks, along with 20 eReaders for lending, by May 2022.
- The library will promote the digital collection, train users, and track circulation data from May 2022 onward.
- The library will conduct a user survey from January through June 2023.
- The library will implement a sustainability plan to provide digital content and eReaders by July 2023.

- September – October 2021:
  The Project Director has already researched and collected proposals from a number of digital content providers and chosen Bibliotheca's cloudLibrary as the preferred digital content provider. This is the provider currently used by the nearest regional library system, so may already be familiar to some in the community. The company has 10 years of experience serving customers around the world, and is based in Oakdale, Minnesota. It has a reputation for being a local partner that cares about the success of digital library collections. CloudLibrary provides a user-friendly interface with personalized features that will appeal to both first-time and seasoned users.

  She has also researched eReaders for the lending program. The devices must be user-friendly, reasonably priced, and durable for sustainability of the program. They must also have sufficient memory to hold several eBooks and/or eAudiobooks simultaneously without markedly affecting the device's performance.

  Amazon Kindle eReaders are the top-rated e-readers by *Consumer Reports*. The Paperwhite is a mid-priced Kindle that is rated 10 out of 10 by BuyersGuide.org. Paperwhite features:
  - Thin and lightweight, yet durable
  - Waterproof
  - 300 ppi glare-free display can be read even in bright sunlight
  - Bluetooth - can connect to headphones or speakers for listening to eAudiobooks.
  - One battery charge lasts weeks

  The Project Director will obtain updated quotations for the cloudLibrary platform and digital content and 20 Amazon Kindle Paperwhite eReaders bundles, which include covers & chargers. She will also begin drafting circulation policies for digital content

and eReaders to include criteria and borrowing rules, lending periods, and any fees (late, damage, and replacement.)

- November - December 2021
  The Project Director will submit the purchase orders through the Tribe for cloudLibrary & Kindles and decide on the digital content mix, e.g. eBook/eAudiobook, fiction/non-fiction, adult/young adult/juvenile/children's titles. She will schedule a time with cloudLibrary representatives to set up the digital library. She will also purchase the 20 eReaders and begin to select and purchase digital content through the cloudLibrary purchasing platform.

  In any library collection, content is key. In a Tribal library, Native/Indigenous content is paramount. The Project Director will work with cloudLibrary's degreed librarians to ensure that the digital library reflects the Red Lake community and includes Native perspectives and values.

  CloudLibrary offers big-five Publisher titles by famous Native American and Indigenous authors. It also works with American and Canadian independent presses that cover Native peoples – such as Verso and Beacon – which both specialize in social justice issues. It has local content from the Minnesota Historical Society Press, as well as from W.W. Norton, which publishes Native poets like Joy Harjo; Graywolf, a great supporter of Native poets; Tin House, publisher of celebrated Native poet Tommy Pico; Milkweed, publisher of Robin Wall Kimmerer; Counterpoint, publisher of Terese Marie Mailhot of Heart Berries fame; Levine Querido, publisher of Eric Gansworth; and Canadian presses, including ECW, Orca Book Publishers, Annick, Greystone, Groundwood Books and Thistledown.

  CloudLibrary also provides access to the newest and most popular content, including access to more than 105,000 publishers, such as: Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, Hachette, as well as hundreds of smaller eBook and eAudiobook publishers. It has more than 2 million eBook and over 270,000 eAudiobook titles available for purchase. The content includes both in-demand front list titles, as well as backlist titles. In addition, cloudLibrary™ brings Red Lake Nation College access to optional collections:
    - 18,000+ Comics, Graphic Novels and Manga through ComicsPlus
    - 7,000+ eMagazine titles and newspapers

  Based on typical usage patterns, cloudLibrary's collection team recommends a mix of 60% eBook, and a 40% eAudiobook for a digital collection. For popular new releases/best sellers, they encourage the purchase of both the eBook version and the eAudiobook version to meet the needs of both patron preferences. (Most eAudiobooks do not expire, so they also add value to the long-term sustainability of the collection.)

  The Medweganoonind Library plans to start with 1,800-2,000 titles in order to be able to immediately provide a wide variety of subjects and titles that are available for

simultaneous checkout with 2-3 week loan periods. This will require approximately $100,000 to achieve the 60% ebook/40% eAudiobook mix. In addition, cloudLibrary's collection team recommends a collection mix of 60% adult, 20% young adult (YA) and 20% juvenile/children's titles. For popular new releases/best sellers, they encourage the purchase of both the eBook version and the eAudiobook version to meet the needs of both patron preferences. (Most eAudiobooks do not expire, so they also add value to the long-term sustainability of the collection.)

Content selection and purchase will be an ongoing task throughout the entire project.

- January - April 2021
  The Project Director will work with cloudLibrary representatives to set up the digital library system. Setup is expected to take approximately 4-6 weeks. CloudLibrary representatives will lead the implementation, train library staff, and ensure a successful launch, as well as post-launch account management.

  There are multiple setup options for the library's current management system (Populi), either using a SIP2 connection or a free hosted barcode for authentication. The Project Director will also compile and/or create communications and user training materials. CloudLibrary has a number of very good user training/instruction materials available online, within the app, and also in printable formats. There are also video tutorials on YouTube.

  The Project Director will work with any other library staff to process and set up the eReaders for circulation. eReaders will be tagged for inventory, registered, and loaded with the necessary apps and shortcuts. Other library staff will be trained in eReader use, checkout, and return policies/procedures.

- June 2022
  The digital library goes live and the eReader lending program will begin. As soon as the go-live date is known, the communications plan will be executed. The communication plan starts with informing the library customers, the Nation's members and community. The Project Director is also the College's Communications and Public Relations Coordinator, so will be responsible for promoting the new digital library and eReader lending program. Promotions will include a mailing to all Reservation households, flyers to post and hand out at community events, social media posts (Facebook and Instagram), college newsletter articles, news releases to local media, email blasts, and word-of-mouth.

- June 2022 – May 2023
  Library staff will promote and circulate digital content and eReaders and train new users. CloudLibrary has a number of very good user training/instruction materials available, online, within the app, and in printable formats. There are also video tutorials on YouTube.

Printed instructions and/or links to instruction materials will be provided with each first-time checkout and upon request. Library staff will also offer demonstrations and/or one-on-one help to new users. Circulation data will be tracked for digital content and the eReaders.

- January – July 2023
Library staff will review policies for possible adjustments. Circulation statistics will be monitored and monthly reports prepared by Library staff will include digital content and eReader devices usage data. Any implementation or usage issues will be addressed as they arise.

- May – June 2023
The Project Director will compile data for the final report to IMLS. She will create and implement an assessment survey for the digital library and eReader lending program for library customers to submit. The survey will also include a needs assessment to provide direction for program expansion and/or future projects. Library staff will implement the survey. The Project Director will also compile and begin analyzing circulation data to determine where improvements might be made. The data and analysis will be used for the final IMLS report

- July – August 2023
The Project Director will write and submit the final IMLS report by the due date.

Risks
Potential risks include damage, loss, and theft of the eReaders. The Kindle Paperwhite is waterproof and has a plastic screen that is scratch- and shatter-resistant and covers will further reduce the risk of damage. Policies that clearly communicate lending periods and consequences of damage or loss of devices (replacement fees and/or loss of privileges), as well as the implementation of a sustainability plan should also help to mitigate these risks.

Data Sharing
Circulation data will be collected and tracked for all digital content and eReaders. This information will be shared in all regular library reports going forward.

Project Results

The primary outcome of the project is establishing a digital library collection where none existed before in the Medseganoonind Library. In doing so, library patrons can access library materials even if they are unable to visit the Medweganoonind Library in person. This is a benefit to those with mobility issues and anyone who lacks transportation or cannot get to the library for any reason. It also allows for easier and safer access to materials during inclement weather or when restrictions like those implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic are imposed.

Another outcome of the project is that library services are expanded beyond the physical collection. Digital content provides added convenience and appeals to those who prefer digital formats.

The digital content can be returned automatically, so is not subject to the same risk of being overdue, damaged, or lost. This means that titles are available immediately after each checkout expires with no manual processing time.

In addition, new eReader users will learn and gain experience with digital technology and gain access to a whole new realm where information is at their fingertips.

Sustainability and Collection Growth
Medweganoonind Library is unable to purchase thousands of new digital titles each year with its typical annual budget. This project is meant to establish a sufficiently large digital collection to be of true benefit to the community. This initial collection will be expanded over time with smaller annual expenditures, just as is done with the physical library collection. The $500 minimum content purchase, which is scheduled to begin during the fifth year with cloudLibrary, should be sustainable and will become a regular line item within the library's annual budget going forward.

In addition, Bibliotheca offers a cost-effective sharing option called cloudLink, which functions much like interlibrary loan. By choosing to use cloudLink, Medweganoonind Library could access other library collections, including Kitchigami Regional Library's 10,500-copy collection (the nearest regional library system). This is a promising option for sustainability and collection growth into the future.

Schedule of Completion - 2021 IMLS Enhancement Grant Proposal

PROJECT TITLE	Digital Library & eReader Lendng Project	COMPANY NAME	Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians - Medweganoonind Library
PROJECT MANAGER	Interim Library Director	DATE	5/1/21

PHASE		DETAILS	2021		2022						2023			
			SEP/OCT	NOV/DEC	JAN/FEB	MAR/APR	MAY/JUN	JUL/AUG	SEP/OCT	NOV/DEC	JAN/FEB	MAR/APR	MAY/JUN	JUL/AUG
1	Planning	Obtain Updated Pricing for cloudLibrary	■											
		Obtain Updated Pricing for eReaders	■											
		Draft Policies for Digital Content and eReader Lending	■	■	■									
2	Purchase Digital Content & eReaders	Process Purchase Orders		■										
		Decide Digital Content Mix		■										
		Schedule Digital Library Setup		■										
		Purchase eReaders		■										
		Select & Purchase Digital Content		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	Digital Library Setup & Communications Planning	Digital Library Setup			■	■								
		Compile Communications & User Traning Materials			■	■								
		eReader Setup			■	■								
		Staff Training			■	■								
4	Circulation Implementation	Promote New Program					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
		Circulate New Items					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
		Provide Customer Training					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
		Track Circulation Data					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
5	Project Close	Create & Conduct Survey									■	■	■	
		Compile Circulation Data											■	
		Write & Submit Final Report												■

PROJECT END