

Bishop Paiute Tribe – Resource Center Project

NARRATIVE

Project Justification

The Bishop Paiute Tribe (BPT) is requesting funding to build upon and enhance the successes that resulted from a previous project, the CULTURE program, funded through 2015 and 2017 IMLS Enhancement grants.

Bishop Paiute culture and language is included as much as possible in all of its projects as a preservation tool and as a means to educate the community on their history and ties to the land. Bishop Paiute Tribal members are descendants of the "Nuumu," the original people of the Owens Valley. In 1912, the U.S. Government reserved over 67,000 acres of lands in the Owens Valley for the Native Americans of this area. However, in 1932, President Hoover revoked this promise and placed the lands in watershed protection status for the City of Los Angeles. In 1936, Los Angeles wanted the remaining lands, so the federal government traded these lands for the 875 acres that now comprise the Bishop Paiute Reservation located at the base of the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains in northern Inyo County outside the city of Bishop, CA. With 2,141 Tribal members, the BPT is the fifth largest California Tribe on one of the smallest Tribal land bases.

Ages ago, the people lived in harmony with the land. All their needs – food, clothing, housing, medicine, arts – were met through seasonal hunting and gathering around which their whole culture was based. The 1932 land removal was a traumatic personal and cultural experience which the people still carry deep inside. It did irreparable harm to the Owens Valley Native Americans and the Paiute Tribe, dramatically reducing their ability to sustain their economy, culture, traditions, and social structure.

The previously funded CULTURE program became an important community resource, contributing to the social and cultural healing and recovery of the BPT. While expanding literacy and education through unique resources and activities based on past traditions and history, the program has led to stronger self-identity and self-knowledge of participants. This sense of pride builds healthier people, more likely to succeed socially and economically.

Today, the BPT is governed by a 5-member Tribal Council. The Tribe provides many community services through various departments including the Environmental Management Office, Social Services, RAVE, Tribal Court, Tribal Police, Food Sovereignty Program, Bishop Indian Head Start, Bishop Indian Education Center, Elders Program, Head Start, Tribal Historic Preservation, Tribal Enrollment, Tribal Fiscal Offices, Tribal Administration, Public Works, and Owens Valley Paiute-Shoshone Cultural Center. Frequent partners include the Toiyabe Indian Health Project, providing medical and dental services and the Owens Valley Career Development Center (OVCDC) which oversees and administers TANF-related programs.

Description of The Tuniwa Nobi Family Literacy Center & Library Services

The Tuniwa Nobi Family Literacy Center & Library Services is a collaborative effort started in 1996 by the Bishop Paiute Tribe and the OVCDC to provide resources to increase the literacy

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skills of family members in the community. The Libraries serve as gathering places where families can learn and share together, inspire ideas and practice lifelong learning skills. Enrichment of tribal life is provided via materials to better understand our heritage while supporting cultural ways of life.

The Tuniwa Nobi Family Literacy Center (TWN) is located on Tribal land near the OVCD's TANF support "campus" which makes for an optimum "one-stop" for the BPT residents. TWN oversees the library services of the BPT community and is supported by the OVCD. It houses the Children's Library which is a checkout library where each participating family has a library card for checkout use. The library room is approximately 15'x 20' and houses 900 age-appropriate children's books written by Native authors for children aged infant through teens. There is a flat screen TV, DVD and CD player, round sitting pillows, a toddler bench, a children's table and chairs. There are approximately 25 DVD's and cd's. Activities include an Afterschool Learning Circle for school age children up to 3rd grade each Tuesday and Thursday. Children learn book care, reinforce reading skills, increase vocabulary, and learn about other tribes and tribal cultures. Bishop Indian Head Start students visit one day a week and can engage in literacy, reading, see puppet shows and be a part of oral story time. Children can visit the library with their parents, adult family members or guardians and can check out two books for a two- week period.

The Native American Library is situated next to the TWN center and houses a small Parenting Education Resource Library. The library includes approximately 1,500 books, 70 videos/DVDs relating to or created by Native Americans, including fiction, nonfiction, biographies, and poetry covering historical, tribal, environmental, food/nutrition, and "how to" topics. There is a flat screen TV, DVD player, CD/cassette player, and 1 computer with internet access. /DVDs relating to or created by Native Americans, including fiction, nonfiction, biographies, and poetry covering historical, tribal, environmental, food/nutrition, and "how to" topics. Programs include Adult and Family Book Clubs, Cultural Awareness workshops, Adult Reading Activities, Reading Challenges and Family Literacy activities. The Parenting Education Resource Library provides opportunities for parents to increase knowledge and skills in being the child's first teacher and an advocate in their academic years. All of the libraries are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

The Bishop Paiute Elders have a book club held at the Elders Building. The book club has become a place for elders to socialize and maintain cognition and short- and long-term memory through reading and discussion.

Needs, Problems and Challenges for the Bishop Paiute Tribe Resource Center Project

The Bishop Paiute Tribe Resource Center Project will align with Goal 1 of the IMLS agency-level goals, Champion Lifelong Learning, and Goal 2 of the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Goals and Objectives: Improve educational programs related to specific topics and content areas of interest to library patrons and community-based users.

The 2015 and 2017 IMLS Enhancement grant-funded CULTURE project was a huge success and brought attention to the libraries and dramatically increased attendance and use of the

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libraries. But a variety of challenges have come along with this success and created a need for more space and for infrastructure development. These needs have been identified through a variety of surveys and by staff and board meetings and discussions. There are four major issues:

1. The libraries are at full capacity of resource materials. There is not an empty shelf or space to add shelves to house any new or future materials purchased, books, dvd's audio, etc. Older, but usable, books and other supplies are stored in a cargo container at another location.
2. The libraries have very limited spatial area to peruse items available for check out or to conduct research. The lack of space does not allow for a truly enjoyable positive experience as the seating is limited or unavailable and the spaces always appear crowded and uninviting even with added aesthetics. Library staff has had to hold split sessions of some activities because too many families show up. Areas are too cramped for participation and with the pandemic, we need even more social distancing.
3. There is no designated area to allow for quiet experiences to explore materials or to house a computer for research that takes more time, such as archives or book reviews. The extra computer was purchased for that purpose, but it is always being used, and there are no barriers or individual research space
4. The two libraries are disconnected as they are housed in two separate buildings, which does not allow for a quality family experience as the adult and children's libraries are not inclusive. One has to either go back and forth or choose one or the other.

Our libraries should be a one stop place/center to encourage family learning together and modeling reading side by side because we will continue to use the Kenan Model in our program delivery. There is currently no street visibility to draw attention to our library locations to the public and the community, even with signage. The libraries are hidden and lack the room to accommodate events and activities that will encourage families/individuals to visit and explore the wonderful world of literacy, reading and culture within the communities we serve.

A larger building could also be an advantage as it could include a stage area for readings and storytelling as well as house the audience and tables/chairs as we look ahead to public visitors once again, after the pandemic, basically offering more room to invite more people. We have had to use other spaces off location to do so in the past, which directly takes away from the library experience. With larger space we could serve a larger portion of our 559 Tribal members under the age of 18 and our 271 locally residing elders and host more intergenerational cultural activities.

Project Work Plan

Goals of the Bishop Paiute Tribe Resource Center Project

The Bishop Paiute Resource Center Project will 1) seek to obtain a larger building where all library services can be housed and have space to expand; and 2) needs and interests of learners,

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including digital needs, will be identified to support the development of classes, events, and other educational resources in the larger building.

Timeline

Project Initiation – BPT Finance office will set up grant files for award acceptance. Outreach will be conducted to the community through newsletters, BPT radio station announcements, and flyers to let them know the latest plans and the coming survey to identify a vision and needs for the expanded area. Job descriptions for a Project Coordinator and Librarian (attached) will be posted and distributed through BPT Human Resources, a hiring committee formed, and successful applicants will be hired and given detailed information about their positions. One staff person will attend the ATALM conference with the Family Literacy Coordinator whose attendance will be paid through the BASIC grant. (September 2021- December 2021)

Community Surveys – The newly hired Project Coordinator and Librarian will prepare and distribute a survey to identify the current needs and interests of community learners for the development of classes, events, teaching tools, resources, and services. The survey will include an evaluation of the existing program. The survey will be distributed from January thru April 2022 and results analyzed in May 2022. Staff and partners will then hold meetings with the community in June 2022 to examine options for improving services and gather additional input. (January 2022- June 2022)

Site Search – Staff will research and suggest potential larger sites on the BPT reservation for consideration, visit the sites, and prepare a list pros and cons of each site. Staff will present ideas to BPT Tribal Council for their comment before proceeding further. After a preliminary decision is made, staff will have a building inspection by the BPT Community Development Department (CDD) to check a variety of issues including roof condition, window condition, electrical service, numbers of electrical outlets, capacity, water/sewer condition, internet capability, ADA compliance, and security issues. (July 2022-December 2022)

Building Modifications/Floor Plan – Staff will review the report on building condition and with CDD staff, develop a cost estimate of any modifications to ensure the feasibility of the move. Funding or volunteer hours from partnerships will be sought for any building modifications. Staff will review the status and effectiveness of existing digital resources, e.g. check-out process, forms, and using the community survey results examine ways to expand digital access through computers, laptops, tablets, printers, scanners, database, free software and digital services. A floor plan will be developed to provide best use of space. BPT is working on a broadband system for the reservation so appropriate connection lines will be investigated through the BPT IT department (July 2022-January 2023)

Development & Implementation of Classes – Using results of the community survey, staff will continue regular book lending and events in all libraries, given the restrictions of COVID-19. Staff will also consider how to adapt existing events to be more compatible with community survey interests. Methods of digital transfer will be reviewed. Staff will pursue partnerships and other funding opportunities for sustainability of the program. (January 2022 – August 2023).

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Policies & Procedures – Policies and procedures for library use, receiving, handling, and storage of digital resources, emergency management operations, etc will be reviewed and updated as needed by staff, OVDC leadership, BPT leadership, and partners. (January 2022 – August 2023)

Relocation – Using the floorplan as a basis, resources, equipment, and supplies will be moved from the old libraries into the new building. (May 2023 – August 2023)

CULTURE Workshops/Library Services – Family learning workshops related to the Bishop Paiute culture will be held every quarter. The library will be open as usual for book check out and learning events, depending on COVID-19 restrictions. (January 2022 – August 2023).

Reporting – Progress and financial reports will be prepared and sent to IMLS as required, or on a quarterly basis. (September 2021 – August 2023)

Project Design - Expanding Upon the Existing CULTURE Program

This Resource Center Project and the existing CULTURE program will follow concepts from the Kenan Model, a family literacy model based on Adult Education, Parenting Education, Children’s Education and Parent and Child Interactive activities. The Kenan model was designed to teach undereducated parents together with their 3- or 4-year-old children. Children participate in a comprehensive preschool program while adults study in various academic and vocational areas. During Parent and Child Together (PACT) time, parents and children work and play together. The Parent Time (PT) component allowed parents to meet as a group to address significant problems. Strong partnerships have been created tribal agencies and have contributed to Bishop Paiute Tribe and OVDC assisting families with diverse backgrounds and special needs.

The Resource Center Project will hire a part-time Project Coordinator and part-time Librarian. Due to COVID-19 and its financial impacts, these two positions were not filled since the end of the 2017 IMLS Enhancement grant. Victoria De La Riva, the Tuniwa Nobi Family Literacy Coordinator will continue to oversee the CULTURE program, and oversee advertisement for the new hires at no cost to IMLS Enhancement. Job descriptions for the new hires are attached and demonstrate the experience and skills that the project will look for. Some oversight of the project will be provided by Family Literacy and through the existing partnerships.

OVDC will play a key role in this project because many low-income BPT residents are their clients, and the project’s target population is the underserved in the BPT community. The ongoing CULTURE program will continue to blend multiple services from the OVDC’s TANF program including the OVDC Language program into creating a unique experience unavailable elsewhere. Knowledge leads to confidence and self-worth, and that leads to personal capacity leading to economic growth.

The CULTURE program will address some of the lasting effects of the losses experienced by the BPT. The overall design of the CULTURE program is to build knowledge through community history and culture while its positive “side effects” will be a greater literacy level to enhance the opportunities to grow economically. It is a belief that a compassionately managed program, with

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support mentors in place, can have an array of positive effects on one's life. The CULTURE program is designed to provide the support, the mentors, and the management to bring about a successful outcome for all those who participate. The CULTURE program will be a component of reducing the social, educational, and economic "gap" of the underserved in the BPT community.

Updated policies and procedures will also include a communication plan and organizational chart to make sure all library staff, partners, and funders are involved in decisions. Findings and lessons learned will be shared in regular meetings of all members of the partnerships and these meetings will be open to the community. Input from all those involved will be welcomed and recorded.

Continuing Partnerships

Bishop Indian Head Start (BIHS) – Bishop Indian Head Start serves 48-60 children, 3- to 5-years of age and their families in all phases of pre-school educational activities. BIHS has age-appropriate activities to coordinate with the CULTURE program. The BIHS will bring support via their experienced teachers and proven cultural approaches. The BIHS will have field trips to the library(s) and be a main contributor to the CULTURE program support structure.

Owens Valley Paiute/Shoshone Cultural Center and Museum (OVPSCC) -The TWN Family Literacy Program has collaborated with the OVCCM to implement Cultural Awareness activities which include hand games, basketry, beading and storytelling. The Cultural Center has current plans for creating a resource library which will hold books and information on the Paiute/Shoshone people and will collaborate with the CULTURE program and with the Resource Center project. The OVCCM houses exhibits of the history of the Owens Valley Tribes and a wealth of artifacts and pictures on display presenting the history of the Natives in Owens Valley.

Bishop Tribal Elder Center (BTEC) – The BTEC, a valuable resource, is a facility where BPT elders meet and receive services to stay active in their community and culture. The BPT elders are an essential component of the CULTURE program, involved in coordinating many intergenerational activities.

OVCDC Adult Education Program – The OVCDC's Adult Education Program will provide access and support to adults who wish to continue their quest for knowledge by providing tutoring and sharing of resources to support the BPT community residents obtaining their educational goals.

OVCDC Language and Culture Program – The OVCDC's Language and Culture program will provide services regarding the local Native language and bring language support activities to the CULTURE program to blend in where and when appropriate.

Risks and Mitigation

Risks to this project include not being able to find large enough space, not having policies and procedures to follow, environmental emergencies e.g. fire, flood, COVID-19, lack of adequate funding.

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Because the BPT moved many of its offices into the old Toiyabe Indian Health Center building when it became vacant, there are several potential choices for space. If a single larger facility cannot be found, it would be possible to move supplies and books and resources that are in the cargo container into the smaller office. The literacy office could remain there as well, and the family events could be held in a slightly larger building. Another option would be finding a prefabricated 4-5 bedroom home that might be available and do some minor building modifications.

Mitigation includes developing and updating policies and procedures so that they cover access and preservation of digital and other resources. Transferring and updating formats is an important component of preservation into the future.

The Tribe and OVDC will update their Emergency Plans because of the COVID pandemic which no one expected. The virus had tremendous impact, but showed where our vulnerabilities are. The BPT has an emergency management committee and is working with FEMA and others currently on plans for the future. One project is a filmed oral history review of the impact of COVID and the Tribe's response for future events. This is in process, but a copy could be made available to the libraries.

Lack of funding is always an issue, especially in the last year. BPT will continue to search out funding. It is possible to partner with a funded department on some of their grants. The library and BPT grant writer will work together to find additional funds.

Project Results

Of course, the main result of this project is a larger building, placing families closer together in the learning process. But as a result, we hope to have disadvantaged and underserved youth and adults capable of reaching higher personal performance goals. Reading from birth to age 5 is a catalyst for brain and cognitive development. The youth and young ones are the future of the Tribe. We want them to be as sharp, knowledgeable, and successful as possible. Reading proficiency is a primary indicator for future academic success and quality of life.

Many adults in the BPT community did not have access to culturally relevant materials and programs to build their knowledge on who they are and why they should be proud of their history. Not knowing has created a "culture gap" due to the lack of knowledge to pass to their children. The CULTURE program, with its family orientated curriculum and participation, is designed to bring some of the lost knowledge to the parents while instilling it in their children, with the hope that a continual and growing base of "teachers" evolve from the program. While expanding literacy and education through unique resources and activities based on past traditions and history, the project will lead to stronger self-identity of participants. This sense of pride builds healthier people, more likely to succeed socially and economically.

Our success will be measured at the end of each funding year by:

- Adults will show a 20% increase in literary skills in the Family Literacy Assessment
- At least 50 new adults and children will request library cards and borrow books

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- One new building where all family members can meet and engage in activities
- Digital transfer will take place for existing outdated formats
- Education Center Partnership will be developed to measure improved grades in 20% of students
- Quarterly partnership and community meetings will be held

Data collected:

Number and age of visitors

Number and age of new visitors

Number of library cards requested

Number of books charged out

Number of cultural activities held and attendance at each

Number of visitors using computer for homework or job applications

General satisfaction survey

Deliverables:

Results of survey of interests

An updated Policy and Procedure Manual including a communications plan and emergency plan

Photos of the new building as a tangible accomplishment

Copy of floor plan

Photos of families engaging in cultural activities

BPT and OVCD plan to work together to find other cultural funding sources and volunteer hours, as well as donations from partners and local business.

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IMLS Enhancement Grant FY 2021-2023

Schedule of Completion-First Year 2021-2022

Activities	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Project Initiation –set up of grant award files and Announcement	_____											
Recruitment/Hires	_____											
ATALM Conference 2021			_____									
Prepare and Distribute Community needs and interest Surveys and analyze results					_____							
Staff and Partners hold community meeting to examine options										_____		
Search, visit, and prepare findings for larger sites											_____	
Building Modifications of floor plan and develop a cost estimate											_____	
Expand digital access and improve cataloging of books and check out process											_____	

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IMLS Enhancement Grant FY 2021-2023

Schedule of Completion-First Year 2021-2022

Activities	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Development and Implementation of classes from surveys					_____							
Policies and Procedures for Library use and emergency management plan					_____							
Relocation from old libraries to new building												
Library open for book check out/in					_____							
Culture Family Learning Workshop 1					_____							
Culture Family Learning Workshop 2					_____							
Culture Family Learning Workshop 3					_____							
Reporting on progress and financials	_____											

