

## **Giin ina owe gimazina'igan? (Is this your book?)**

### **Organizational Profile**

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan (SCIT) is a federally recognized Indian Tribe established by Treaty on August 2, 1855. Organized under Constitution and By-Laws ratified by the Tribe on November 4, 1986 pursuant to P.L. 99-346, the Tribal Clerk's Office reports it has an approximate membership of 3,558<sup>1</sup>. SCIT is spread across two locations. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Population and Labor Report dated January 16, 2014, SCIT's total service area population is 3,643. The Isabella Reservation is located in Central Michigan's Isabella County approximately 67 miles north of the state's capital of Lansing. It is approximately 219 square miles encompassing Isabella County Townships of Wise, Denver, Isabella, Nottawa, Deerfield, and the northern halves of Union and Chippewa Townships. The Saganing Reservation is located 70 miles east in Arenac County and includes three small tracts of trust land in Standish and Lincoln Townships.

The largest community near the Isabella Reservation is the City of Mt. Pleasant, located three miles west of the Tribal Center with a population of 25,847.<sup>2</sup> It is surrounded by a diverse population of approximately 71,063<sup>3</sup> persons in Isabella County, which is mostly rural with an unemployment rate of 4.6%<sup>4</sup> and an alarming poverty rate of 23.8%<sup>3</sup>. However, it does have a growing commercial and light industry base with SCIT and the Tribe's Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort as the area's largest employer with a workforce of 3,384 employees. Central Michigan University (CMU) is the second largest employer in the area with approximately 2,600 employees.<sup>5</sup>

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Libraries operate as part of the Tribal Education Department, whose Mission Statement is: The Tribal Education Department is committed to developing educated, confident, competitive, proficient citizens who excel in any venture they pursue while maintaining their rich Anishinaabe culture and language. This statement was developed during the May 2009 Education Strategic Planning Session and approved by the Tribal Education Advisory Board on September 16, 2009.

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Library, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College Library, and Saginaw Chippewa Academy Library provide resources, including popular materials, Ojibwe culture and language materials, Native American-focused resources, professional materials, and curricular support materials. The Tribal Libraries provide access for patrons to check out resources, enjoy the use of library spaces, make use of the library staff's expertise and assistance, and utilize equipment and services, including computers, printers, copiers, scanners, and laminators. The website and online catalog are accessible 24/7 for patrons wherever internet access is available. The Tribal Libraries cooperate with the community and other Tribal departments and strive to focus on the culture and language in all aspects of library services.

### **References**

<sup>1</sup>Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Clerk on February 3, 2019.

<sup>2</sup>United States Census Bureau. Retrieved January 4, 2019 from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/mountpleasantcitymichigan,US/PST045218>;

<sup>3</sup>United States Census Bureau. Retrieved January 4, 2019 from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/isabellacountymichigan,mountpleasantcitymichigan,US/PST045218>

<sup>4</sup>Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Retrieved January 4, 2019 from <https://www.bls.gov/lau/laucnty17.txt>

<sup>5</sup>Central Michigan University. Retrieved January 4, 2019 from <https://www.cmich.edu/about/careers/Pages/default.aspx>

## **2024 Enhancement Grant**

### **Giin ina owe gimazina'igan? (Is this your book?)**

#### **Project Justification**

This project will address Native American Library Enhancement Grants program Goal 2: Improve educational programs related to specific topics and content areas of interest to library patrons and community-based users; Objective 2.2: Support the development and implementation of classes, events, teaching tools, resources, and other educational services.

Through the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Libraries' 2019 Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant, *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi: We all read, we all write*, we learned that the community we serve is enthusiastic about writing and would like more guidance and formal learning opportunities about how to get started and how to craft their own writing for publication. That project resulted in three individuals publishing their own complete works and over a dozen community members contributing pieces to the Anthology. Throughout that project, we gathered feedback from participants about their experiences and used a culminating survey after the conclusion of the project to assess successes and opportunities and to provide an opportunity for patrons to share their interests for future library programs. We heard from many participants that they appreciated being introduced to Native authors and illustrators through *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi* and that they now felt ready for more focused programs dedicated to the craft of writing. We heard from community members and especially from students and teachers that they wish to have workshops on writing presented by qualified Native writers and to have one-on-one time with instructors who can help them revise their work. The participants who created their own books during the *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi* project were very pleased with the results, and others have expressed the desire to have more guidance before they would feel ready to create their own books. "I need help with revising my writing," one participant said.

In addition to the survey responses we collected, we conducted follow-up conversations with individuals in the community. One of the community members who contributed to the *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi* Anthology said, "I've been dreaming of publishing my own poetry book or memoir and having a snippet of it gave me high hopes to go for it in the future." Another told us, "I'd love to have a chance to create my own book, but I could use some help. Getting guidance and the tools needed to publish a book would be amazing." "I would love to see continued programming encouraging our readers, writers, and story tellers in the community," commented another community member.

We also heard a need for more books in the language and about the culture. One community member said they hoped for "more publication opportunities for the community and children's books on language development of Anishinaabemowin." Another remarked, "enlist and encourage other authors to write about their insights into the community as well as share their creative endeavors. An example would be [local chef, name redacted] writing about traditional foods and preparation."

We can see many ways we could follow up on our previous successful project, and originally we had thought to build on the successful author visits that were part of it, but through the process of receiving surveys and having these conversations, it became clear that the greatest excitement and need in the community right now lies in learning more about how to hone the writing craft and providing additional opportunities for self-publication. "I love seeing our people telling our stories," said one community member.

The target group for this project is the community served by the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Libraries generally, with a specific focus on K-12 and post-secondary students, of whom the Tribe currently serves nearly 700. K-12 students served by the Tribal Libraries may attend the Saginaw Chippewa Academy, a local public school, a local charter school, or be homeschooled. Students seeking further education after high school attend the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Mid-Michigan College, Central Michigan University, or another school virtually.

For the previous project, we focused primarily on the general community, but we hope to focus equally as much on the K-12 and post-secondary target groups through this project. We heard the feedback our community has provided, which specifically asks for nurturing children as writers and working with teachers to reach those student audiences. One community member commented, "I would love to see a program for children's creativity," and another said, "I think it is very important for my students to see writers from the community." One particular hope we have for this project is to further language learning in the community, both during the project and through its results. Using Anishinaabemowin is part of everyday library operations, but there is always more we can do to encourage it. "Do bilingual children's picture books to create resources for SCA [Saginaw Chippewa Academy, K-5 elementary school] and Sasiwaans [language immersion preschool] as well as the local public schools." The libraries do purchase bilingual books for the collection, but having books that were written here, in the dialect used by the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Department (ALRD) and created by community members, would be ideal.

Beneficiaries of this project will be those who elect to participate in the project, as well as the community as a whole, and anyone who reads one of the books published at any point in the future. As the writing that will be produced as part of this project will be published, shared, added to the Tribal Libraries' collections, and accessible to the community and beyond into the future, that is a wide reach that cannot be reliably and defensibly counted. The characteristics of the beneficiaries of this project might include those who are tribal members and descendants from this or any other tribe; community members of all ages; preK-12 students and teachers; post-secondary students and instructors/faculty; individuals of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds; those with disabilities; and those who reside in an underserved rural community, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line.

### **Project Work Plan**

Our goals for this project are:

Goal 1: The Tribal Libraries will encourage development of writing skills among community members

Objective 1: Work with partners to build roster of writing workshops

Objective 2: Present writing workshops for community members with a particular focus on K-12 and post-secondary students

Goal 2: The Tribal Libraries will enable local writers to self-publish their books

Objective 1: Assist local writers with the self-publishing process, using the writing workshops as a basis

Objective 2: Provide an opportunity for newly minted authors to share their experiences and share their newly created books with the community

To accomplish these goals and objectives, we will carry out the following activities in this sequence:

1. Cooperatively with identified partners, we will build a schedule of programs, identifying desired writing trainers, the specific topics they will cover, the supplies they will require, and the order in which their workshops will be scheduled.

2. We will contract with those writing trainers, schedule their workshops, purchase general supplies and those indicated by the trainers, and advertise the workshops to the target audiences, taking registration for each session.
3. We will add to the collection writing instructional books recommended by the writing trainers as well as titles well-reviewed in professional journals; we will also distribute instructional books as indicated by the workshop trainers to workshop participants.
4. We will present the workshops to the target audience, providing designated supplies and surveying them after each program.
5. We will use the survey results to assess and to adjust on the fly as needed.
6. We will provide an encouraging writing environment in the libraries, including offering the use of laptops for those who wish to use them; also encouraging participants to gather in the library for group sessions as desired.
7. We will cooperate with the Tribal College Writing Center (located physically within the Tribal College Library) Supplemental Instructors to provide one-on-one revision assistance.
8. We will offer the opportunity for workshop participants who are ready to publish their own books, using the self-publishing company Book Baby, with whom we worked successfully on the previous project; this will include finalizing their draft in correct format for self-publication and submitting it, selecting from available options for the physical book itself, completing the final draft review for their book with one revision if needed to correct typos and such, and making the final sign-off for the publication of their book.
9. We will celebrate the publication of the participants' books with a book launch, which will include an opportunity for the newly minted authors to speak about their experience, and after which the books will be added to the Tribal Libraries' collections; we will also conduct a final post-project survey.

The primary risk to this project would be lack of response from the community; however, we have had such an overwhelming response from the community already that we are confident that with mitigations, including consistent, clear communication from the Tribal Libraries and through collaborating partners, we will have a good response. An example of this enthusiasm can be seen through this written comment from a community member: "I would love to see a recipe book!! Recipes from all over the reservation and everyone's favorite foods from their childhood growing up, etc. That would be cool!!"

This project will be directed by the Tribal Librarian, who will plan, implement, and manage it with the cooperation and assistance of the Library Assistants and staff from other Tribal Departments, including elsewhere in the Education Department as well as the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Department, Tribal College, Accounting, Purchasing, Receiving, and Legal Departments. We will also work together with local collaborators from K-12 schools and local post-secondary institutions, especially for the planning and implementation.

This project will take two years, from September 2024 to August 2026, will require the full amount of the grant application (\$150,000), an estimated 10-20 hours of the Tribal Librarian's time weekly, and the assistance and collaboration of those partners listed above. We will also use other resources from our professional network including staff from other libraries and guiding documents about providing writing workshops in library and community settings. We will also happily receive any guidance provided by the writing experts who will be contracted to provide the workshops.

We have included \$3,000 per year of proposed budget for travel to attend an IMLS-designated meeting.

As we have established in our regular operations and through past projects, we consistently cooperate with many partners for projects like this. We have been in conversation already with and will continue to collaborate with other programs in the Tribal Education Department and with colleagues in the Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Department, Tribal College, Accounting, Purchasing, Receiving, and Legal Departments, as well as with partners at Central Michigan University and Mount Pleasant Public Schools. We will, as ever, expand to include other collaborators if and as they come to light. We will also utilize the library collections, specifically the writing instructional works purchased through and examples of books created in the *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi: We all read, we all write* project, as well as the library technology resources, including public-use PCs, Library of Things laptops (which patrons can borrow), and any other library resources that become applicable.

The Project Director, in collaboration with the library staff and Tribal Public Relations Department, will be responsible for sharing findings and lessons learned through this project. We hope to write an article (or possibly more than one) about this project for publications associated with our professional organization memberships, including Michigan Library Association, American Library Association, and/or American Indian Library Association. We also hope that we will be able to share at professional development opportunities such as conferences or workshops and will certainly share within the group of Michigan Tribal Librarians, which, as of the time of this application, has just started to meet on a semi-annual basis. We will, as we did with *Kina gda gindaasomi, kina gda zhibiigemi: We all read, we all write*, work with Public Relations and the *Tribal Observer* (local newspaper) staff to share information within the community including at least one article and regular sharing of program flyers in the *Tribal Observer*.

### **Project Results**

The intended results of this project include meeting the needs of community members seeking writing instruction and providing the opportunity for community members, especially students, to write their own books. We will measure our goals in the following ways:

Goal 1: The Tribal Libraries will promote authorship among community members

Outcome: Community members will report increased confidence in their writing skills

Goal 2: The Tribal Libraries will enable local writers to self-publish their books

Outcome: Community members will report satisfaction with their self-published books

Effectiveness: After each program, revision assistance session, or other interaction, we will review quantitative outcome-based evaluation survey data and compare to intended project results.

Quality: At the end of each month, we will review qualitative survey data and compare to intended project results.

Timeliness: At the end of each month, our Project Director will assess the fit between the proposed Schedule of Completion and actual activity completion dates.

The target group's knowledge and skills will grow as a result of this project, which we will measure using Project Outcome's Education/Lifelong Learning survey with a few added custom questions specific to this project's goals. Participants will report having learned something that is helpful to them, that they feel confident about what they just learned, that they intend to apply what they just learned, that they are more aware of resources and services provided by the library, that they have increased their confidence in their writing skills, and that they feel satisfied with their self-published books.

Community members, especially students, will create their own books. Our budget plan includes funds for 30 individuals to each create their own book (though that number might vary depending on how things

go: it is possible we could produce one book per participant for an entire classroom for the cost of one hardcover full-length book, so the number of books produced might well end up being more; this will depend on buy-in and follow-through with teachers), and we will also plan to create an anthology of shorter works by those who have something smaller to contribute but aren't ready or interested in authoring an entire book themselves. These will all be print books (no eBooks are included in this project).

We will sustain the benefits of this project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance by adding the books created to the library collections and by distributing copies of the books to those who author them, so those books will "live on" throughout the library and the community. The libraries will also continue to offer writing assistance and instructional books for check-out in the libraries. The libraries hope to continue to support writers in the community through future programs.

| Giin ina owe gimazina'igan? (Is this your book?)            |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| Schedule of Completion                                      |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| Year 1  |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | Year 2 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| 2024  |     |     |     | 2025 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2026   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| Sep   | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan  | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep    | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug |  |
| work with partners to build program roster                  |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| identify writing trainers + specific topics to be covered   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| determine schedule of workshops in optimal order            |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| schedule workshops  |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| work with Legal for contracts                               |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| add workshops to Tribal and partner calendars               |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| advertise workshops   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| take registration for workshops                             |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| present workshops   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| present individual workshops in collaboration with partners |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| add recommended books to the library collections            |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| survey participants immediately post-workshop               |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| use survey results to adjust as needed                      |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| create books  |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| finalize drafts   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| format drafts for publication                               |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| select options for physical books                           |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| complete final draft review (1 revision if needed)          |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| final sign-off on book publication                          |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| book launch   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| official release of books                                   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| opportunity for newly minted authors to speak               |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| books added to Tribal Libraries collections                 |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| post-project survey   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |