Dear Friends and Relatives,

Owas, cante wasteya nape ceyuzapi. We greet you all with a good heart and a handshake.

A tradition of helping others has defined our people, the Mdewakanton Dakota, through times of hardship and through times of prosperity. For more than 25 years, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) has honored that tradition by donating more than $350 million to Native American and non-Native American nonprofits, health care facilities, and local governments for a variety of important projects in our home state of Minnesota and across the country.

This year we provided nearly $18 million in donations for education and scholarships, veterans, youth causes, local communities, health initiatives, economic development for tribal nations, and the preservation of Native languages, arts, and cultures.

This report tells the stories of a selection of donations and tribal grants that demonstrate our Community’s values of being a good neighbor and good steward of the earth—all of which are rooted in our ways as Dakota people. As a tribal government, we work with local governments on mutually beneficial projects, such as roads and infrastructure, which help build a better place for our neighbors and ourselves. To protect and show respect for Unci Maka (Grandmother Earth), we work hard to restore and conserve our natural resources by investing in sustainable energy, such as green roofs and solar panels, in addition to spearheading the Seeds of Native Health campaign for tribal food sovereignty.

On behalf of the SMSC, we would like to thank our tribal members and the approximately 4,100 people employed by our various governmental enterprises. All of the good work happening in our Community and beyond could not be accomplished without them. We also want to extend gratitude to our 2017 donation and grant recipients, who are helping improve the lives of so many.

This report shows only a fraction of the remarkable and meaningful work that tribal communities, nonprofits, and other organizations are doing to enhance the lives of those around them. From community centers to wellness services to cultural programming and preservation, we feel fortunate to be able to support these endeavors.

We invite you to learn more about the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community by visiting our website at shakopeedakota.org.

Pidaunyanpi (We thank you).

SMSC Chairman Charles R. Vig
SMSC Vice-Chairman Keith B. Anderson
SMSC Secretary/Treasurer Freedom Brewer
Since 2012, the SMSC has entrusted its Community Members to make recommendations on donation recipients. The Sharing Resources Work Group meets monthly to review donation requests received throughout the year. Once requests have been reviewed, the work group then makes charitable giving recommendations to the SMSC Business Council.

Through their work, the Sharing Resources Work Group has established a set of guidelines that help determine the SMSC’s method of selection with tribal donations. Their work reflects the mission of the SMSC as a whole—to plan for seven generations ahead and to be a good neighbor, good employer, and good steward of the earth.

“Han Mitakuyepi. Hello, my relatives. I want to thank all of you who have submitted charitable giving requests over the last fiscal year. It’s not always easy to make these decisions, but it is an honor to be a part of supporting so many great projects. We hope that together, we can support one another to create better communities. Pidamayaye. Thank you.”

- ALLENE ROSS, SMSC SHARING RESOURCES WORK GROUP LEADER

The Sharing Resources Work Group
(From left to right) Jennifer Brewer, Work Group Leader Allene Ross, Karen Anderson, SMSC Donations Coordinator and Work Group Facilitator Deborah Peterson, Cherie Crooks, and Selena Mendolia.

For more information about charitable giving and donation requests, please visit Shakopeedakota.org
TABLE OF CONTENTS

TRIBAL
1

ARTS & CULTURE
7

EDUCATION
13

HEALTH
27

IN-KIND
33

LOCAL COMMUNITY
37

VETERANS
41

YOUTH
45
TRIBAL DONATIONS
TRIBAL DONATIONS
To help the tribe build a new wastewater treatment facility, the SMSC provided a grant in the amount of $300,000, with an additional $300,000 promised contingent on the tribe raising the additional funds needed for the project. With this new facility, the tribe will be able to meet the critical infrastructure needs of its entire community, including a K-12 school, community college, community health center, tribal government building, tribal businesses, and more.

**Northern Arapaho Tribe**

**Keeping Tribal Lands Clean**

Maintaining a clean landscape is important not only for the health and well-being of a community but also to protect the integrity of the land itself. Confronted with excessive illegal dumping on its land, the Northern Arapaho Tribe in Wyoming needed a way to clean up the area in a cost-effective manner that would be conducive to long-term results.

Thanks to a $750,000 grant from the SMSC, the tribe was able to purchase several essential pieces of advanced cleanup equipment that enables them to remove solid waste quickly and effectively, while providing the potential for revenue-generating opportunities in the future. Their new equipment, which includes an air burner box, hoist truck, support trucks, and waste carts, can be used to haul waste from neighboring cities for a fee, ultimately helping the tribe support its members and protect its land.
SPIRIT LAKE TRIBE FIRE DEPARTMENT

UPDATING LIFE-SAVING EQUIPMENT

Serving a 405-square-mile area around Fort Totten, North Dakota, the Spirit Lake Fire Department protects a population of approximately 5,000. Each year, the fire department responds to an average 100 motor-vehicle accidents, 20-25 percent of which require mechanical extrication. The department needed updated equipment to help crews respond effectively to automobile accidents. Thanks to a $15,000 matching donation provided by the SMSC, the fire department was able to purchase new auto extrication equipment, including a cutter, spreader, ram, battery, and charger. The new equipment will help the department respond more effectively to motor-vehicle accidents, helping to save lives and keep the community safe.

OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE

PROVIDING A TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE

Up-to-date computers and other technology are critical for tribal governments, especially given the frequency of government-to-government interactions and the complexity of community development. The Oglala Sioux Tribe was in need of computers and other necessary equipment in their district offices on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. With a $100,000 grant from the SMSC, the tribe was able to outfit each district office with four computers and a printer for use by tribal members and staff. Now equipped with the necessary tools to complete their job duties more effectively, Oglala Sioux Tribe members and employees will be better able to pursue community development initiatives and other important plans for their future.
One out of two Native American children born after the year 2000 will develop Type 2 diabetes, a trend that hits home for members of the Red Lake Nation in Minnesota, where more and more children are being diagnosed with the disease. To help reverse this trend, the community needed a place to provide nutritious foods, physical activity, health education, and diabetes prevention. The existing community center—with its old fixtures, dilapidated kitchen, leaky roofs, and mold—was unable to serve the community’s needs and demands. With the help of a $750,000 grant from the SMSC (and another $750,000 promised once the tribe raises additional funds needed for the project), the Red Lake Nation was able to build a new community center to be used as a gathering space for its people.

With a population of 2,561, the Red Lake community’s need for space was significant. In addition to hosting healthy education trainings for youth, the new facility provides ample space for a weekly soup dinner, movie nights, family bingo, weddings, birthday parties, dance lessons, and educational get-togethers. Above all, it enables the community to come together in a safe, intimate environment built specifically for their needs.

“With [the SMSC’s] support, major improvements for our gathering places have allowed us to carry on our traditional culture, language, ceremonies, healthy lifestyle teachings, and other such community events in a safe environment.”

- DARRELL G. SEKI, SR. RED LAKE NATION CHAIRMAN
WINNEBAGO TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

HONORING HERITAGE AND PRIORITIZING SAFETY

For the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, maintaining cultural traditions, honoring elders, and ensuring the safety of its residents are of the utmost significance to honoring their heritage. These values are at the heart of the tribe’s Community Heritage and Safety Project, which received the support of the SMSC through a $506,000 grant. This money is being used to address three components:

SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HoCHUNK COMMUNITY CENTER

The HoChunk Community Center houses the tribe’s wake and burial program, and serves as a gathering place for family and community events. With the help of the SMSC grant, this essential building will receive much-needed maintenance to its siding, roofing, and HVAC system.

BUILDING EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WINNEBAGO SENIOR CENTER

As the primary meeting space for community seniors, the Winnebago Senior Center hosts daily social events, meals, health education, and other important gatherings. With a single large meeting room, the building is being expanded to include more private meeting space for health-related discussions, legal meetings, and other personal matters.

COMMUNITY OF WINNEBAGO WARNING SIRENS UPGRADE

As a rural community, the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska needed a reliable means of notifying its members in the event of inclement weather or another similar emergency. As such, the grant will help fund an upgrade to the existing, inadequate warning siren system.

“The longstanding practice of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community to assist tribes and organizations throughout the country is tremendous,” Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska Chairman Frank White said in response to the grant. “The value of helpfulness is something we should all hold dear, and their charitable giving program demonstrates the positive impacts that it can make.”
“This is an opportunity for us to move into the future and change the dynamics of the services we are able to provide. The clinic expansion and added service of an optical center will truly improve our abilities to provide to the community.”

- SHANNON HOLSEY
STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE TRIBAL PRESIDENT

STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE COMMUNITY
BAND OF MOHICAN INDIANS

IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

Recognizing that their existing health and wellness center had surpassed its capacity to serve the community, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians set about finding a way to expand their equipment, services and space. With the help of a $250,000 grant from the SMSC, the Wisconsin community was able to purchase advanced wellness center equipment, including a pharmacy robotics machine and optical devices.

The pharmacy robotics machine, which is capable of filling prescriptions, overnight refills, and hands-off operation with an accuracy rate of 99.999 percent, will help decrease waiting time for patients and also attract pharmacists to the area. Furthermore, since all eye services previously had to be outsourced, the optical equipment enables the tribe to better ensure that its community has easy access to regular eye exams.

ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE

PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO NATIVE STUDENTS

With two aging minivans that had each logged more than 250,000 miles, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota was in need of more reliable transportation for its education department. To help them meet this need, the SMSC provided $60,000 for two passenger vans that will be used to transport students to and from the Lakota Tiwahe Center and the Truancy Intervention Program run by the education department. These educational services are vital to the tribe’s youth, providing support and encouragement to students with attendance issues, offering assistance to children with developmental delays, and providing a means of transportation to school, airports, and medical facilities as needed. The two new passenger vans will enable the tribe to continue its mission to prepare its younger generations for a successful life on and off the reservation.
WITH homes scattered across a large geographic area in Montana, high-speed internet connections were a rarity for members of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. In today’s technologically driven society, the lack of internet connections put rural and tribal land residents at a serious disadvantage for economic opportunities, education, communication, public safety, and other online benefits.

To combat this virtual isolation, the SMSC extended a matching grant of $500,000 to the Blackfeet Nation to enhance the tribe’s broadband system. This grant—which follows a similarly sized 2015 grant from the SMSC—will help provide fiber network construction and materials, expansion of the wireless system, and engineering, project management, and construction management services.

According to the Federal Communications Commission, Americans living on tribal lands and in rural areas are disproportionately underserved when it comes to internet access. The SMSC’s grant will help bring this essential tool to hundreds of homes on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.
ARTS & CULTURE DONATIONS
DAKOTA 38+2

HORSEBACK RIDE AND RUN HELD IN HONOR OF DAKOTA HISTORY

To promote awareness of Dakota history and to provide healing from historical trauma, the annual Dakota 38+2 horseback ride ended on December 26, 2016, in Land of Memories Park in Mankato, Minnesota. Native Americans from across the region participate in the 38+2 ride every year to honor the lives of the 40 Dakota warriors who died in 1862 in the largest mass execution in U.S. history. To support the various groups riding to Mankato, the SMSC donated $6,000.

The ride, which takes place over many days and hundreds of miles in the bitter cold month of December, is a way to bring awareness to Dakota history and culture. The SMSC’s donations supported riders from the Lower Brule Reservation and the Lower Sioux Reservation, among others. Funds helped riders provide hay for their horses and meals for participants. The SMSC also donated to the Mankato Department of Public Safety for security and police escorts.

To commemorate the lives of Dakota ancestors, the SMSC also donated $9,200 to the 30th Annual Memorial Spiritual Run. The annual Memorial Spiritual Run begins at historic Fort Snelling and ends at the Land of Memories Park on the same day as the horseback ride, December 26. After the run, a ceremony and feast is held. The SMSC’s donation helped support the event’s feast, drum performances, and sweatshirts given to the runners.
DAKOTA WICOHAN

BUILDING YOUTH LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Making a daily difference in the lives of Native American youth, the Dakota Wicohan organization empowers the next generation through Dakota teachings, leadership skill-building, horse-based programs, and other culturally grounded activities. The SMSC granted $5,000 in fiscal year 2017 to support the youth leadership program, which was founded by members of the Lower and Upper Sioux Communities in Minnesota and is open to Dakota youth ages 10-21.

Through a variety of activities—such as Dakota language lessons, beading classes, horseback riding, lacrosse, and a summer camp—the organization helps children, teens, and young adults improve decision-making skills, enhance their knowledge of Dakota lifeways, foster leadership skills, and encourage a sense of well-being and belonging.

The Lower Sioux Reservation has the lowest graduation rate and highest rate of suicide in the state. The need for a positive and productive outlet is of the utmost importance for these at-risk youth. With renewed funding, Dakota Wicohan is able to continue its mission to better the lives of young Dakota people.
Recognizing that tribes with strong foundations of governance are more successful in achieving their goals, the Saint Paul-based Native Governance Center (NGC) aims to provide nation-building support and leadership development to Native nations. With support from a $25,000 matching grant from the SMSC, the NGC provides these supportive services to tribes across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. These services include inspiring and empowering future tribal leaders, providing resources for their governance development, and collaborating with tribes to identify and implement solutions to the specific issues faced by each tribe. By working individually and respectfully with Native nations, the NGC helps foster self-determination, economic development, and stability for those who need it most.
**INDIGENOUS YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM**

**COMMUNITY BUILDING FOR URBAN NATIVE YOUTH**

The SMSC’s $5,000 donation to the Indigenous Youth Empowerment Program (IYEP) will help the nonprofit organization fund its annual Summer Enrichment Camp for urban Native youth in Michigan. Not only does the free camp encourage youth to learn about and embrace their culture, it gives them an opportunity to build lasting relationships with others in their community, while learning valuable leadership skills. The funds gathered will provide the youth with healthy, traditional Anishinaabe foods, various supplies for traditional crafts, field trips, and more.

The IYEP also builds a sense of community through traditional knowledge and cultural awareness through an after-school and tutoring program for K-12 Native youth. The program is a collaboration between Michigan State University’s American Indian Studies Program, Lansing School District’s Title VII Native American Program, Michigan State University’s Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, the Ingham County Health Department, and Lansing Community College.

**NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE SYMPOSIUM**

**INVESTING IN INDIGENOUS STUDIES**

Committed to making Native voices heard, the Native American Literature Symposium, which is run by an independent group of Indigenous scholars, received a $6,000 donation from the SMSC to continue its mission. Hosting its 18th annual conference at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in spring 2017, the group brought together a sea of influential voices to share Native American stories, art, history, politics, music, philosophy, and more.
RECLAIMING NATIVE TRUTH: A PROJECT TO DISPEL AMERICA’S MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

POSITIVELY TRANSFORMING THE POPULAR IMAGE OF NATIVE AMERICANS

Negative stereotypes, discrimination, and bias have affected Native Americans for hundreds of years and continue to be a pervasive issue in today’s media, entertainment industry, and popular culture. To combat these inaccurate perceptions, the SMSC donated $100,000 to Reclaiming Native Truth, a project intended to transform the image of and narrative on Native people.

Reclaiming Native Truth’s advisory committee of Native leaders, stakeholders, and racial equity experts and advocates is working to understand the underlying reasons for society’s negative and inaccurate perceptions of Native Americans.

“Over the next two years, this project is focused on understanding the true extent of society’s negative and inaccurate perceptions of Native Americans and finding the best means of overcoming them,” said Crystal Echo Hawk, project co-director and president and CEO of Echo Hawk Consulting. “Only then will we have the knowledge we need to design a broad campaign to solve this problem.”

Once the project has concluded in 2018, leaders will use their findings to develop a national campaign to improve awareness, respect, and equality for Native Americans.

“Launching an unprecedented national project like Reclaiming Native Truth requires farsighted dedication from planners and funders,” said Michael Roberts, project co-director and CEO of First Nations Development Institute. “The SMSC’s donation shows a long-term commitment to improving the lives of Native Americans.”
One of the most endangered languages in the nation, the Dakota language needs a dedicated, full-scale effort to ensure that this important piece of cultural identity is retained for generations to come. Thanks to a nearly $2 million commitment from the SMSC (which will be split between 2017 and 2018), a two-year intensive Dakota language training program was created with the aim of increasing Dakota speakers and teachers throughout the country. Named Voices of Our Ancestors, the program is the result of a partnership between the SMSC and four tribal colleges, and will train more than 20 Native students across the participating communities.

“We have very few Dakota speakers left who grew up speaking the language,” said SMSC Chairman Charles R. Vig. “Fortunately, the number of second-language fluent speakers is gradually increasing. They are the keys to preserving our language and teaching our next generation. This program will add much-needed Dakota speakers and teachers in several communities across the country.”

To fully immerse the trainees in the program, Voices of Our Ancestors is held 40 hours per week over two years and covers Dakota language, history, and culture. When the program is complete, the students will be able to share their newly acquired knowledge with their communities, teaching these valuable language skills to family and friends and preserving it for generations to come.
EDUCATION

DONATIONS
Creating opportunities for urban students to discover and explore their passions can be a challenging feat for large school districts. Thanks to a $12,000 donation from the SMSC, the Minneapolis Public Schools Indian Education Department helped the district’s Native youth participate in academic, athletic, and cultural enrichment opportunities. The funds also helped cover student activity fees for athletics, band, and after-school enrichment; school supplies for students receiving free or reduced school lunches; and activities, such as field trips, language tables, drum groups, and pow wows.

“I cannot express enough how much these resources are needed and valued by our students and families. Your support is instrumental in assisting us to meet the cultural and academic needs of the more than 1,300 Native students in our district who represent more than 50 different tribes.”

- ANNA ROSS, DIRECTOR OF INDIAN EDUCATION FOR MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
With the help of a $15,000 donation from the SMSC, the Experiential Education and Summer Indigenous Learning programs at Nawayee Center School in Minneapolis went off without a hitch. Students at the school enjoyed a range of hands-on, outdoor activities including kayaking, astronomy lessons, and field trips to historical Native American sites.

With a strong commitment to serving Native American youth, Nawayee Center School provides transformative education, grounded in Indigenous ways of life and a love of learning. Funds from the SMSC also allowed the school to complete needed updates to the building.
INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF NATIVE COMMUNITIES

To celebrate and recognize the important role educators and communities play in raising and molding the next generation of leaders within Indian Country, the SMSC provided a $5,000 sponsorship to the 48th Annual National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Convention and Trade Show held in October 2017 in Orlando, Florida. The theme of NIEA’s 2017 Convention, “Building Education Nations by Amplifying Innovative Voices,” brought together advocates dedicated to improving academic success within Native communities.

Outdated scoreboards were replaced in 2017 at the Lower Brule High School, located on the Lower Brule Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, thanks to a $13,000 matching grant from the SMSC. The funds were used to replace football and gymnasium scoreboards and purchase shot clocks for the basketball hoops. “The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is most grateful for the many opportunities the SMSC has provided us and empowered us with,” said Boyd Gourneau, Chairman of the tribe.
Native Americans from regional tribes in Minnesota gathered to launch the first-of-its-kind Professional Certificate in Tribal Administration and Governance program at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD). The three-part program began in summer 2017 when participants attended a training program through UMD’s Tribal Sovereignty Institute. In the fall, the group convened for a symposium where scholars presented emerging research on best practices in tribal administration and applied tribal sovereignty. The SMSC donated $37,000 to the program and hosted the fall symposium at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Prior Lake, Minnesota.

The program seeks to train future Native tribal leaders through coursework grounded in ethics. It focuses on tribal governance and the management issues encountered on a reservation, as well as the complex relations among tribal, state, and federal governments. Online and phone mentoring will continue through spring 2018 when the participants will gather for a two-day retreat to round out the program.

“One great advantage to the program is its easy access. Tribal leaders and administrators entering governance for the first time need to quickly become effective in service and leadership to their communities. Tribal administrators and staff will receive training to improve their problem-solving skills and get access to materials and scholarships that can assist them.”

- TADD JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF THE UMD TRIBAL ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE GRADUATE PROGRAM
Native American college students from all walks of life move to Montana’s Gallatin Valley seeking the knowledge and skills it takes to thrive in a new place. Parents tell their children when they leave for Montana State University (MSU) that they are “going home” to where their ancestors once hunted in the mountains that halo the valley.

More than 650 Native American students from 53 tribal nations and 15 states attend college at MSU, with enrollment having doubled since 2010. But as many as 22 percent of Native students leave the university before completing their education. One of the biggest obstacles for these students is the feeling of separation and loss from their communities as they work to complete their degree over several years. MSU wanted to provide a home away from home by building an American Indian Student Center, a place for Native American students to call their own and to practice and share their culture.

The SMSC provided a $25,000 matching grant to MSU to help build an American Indian Student Center, a space for Native students to practice, share, and honor their heritage. The center will showcase Native American culture on campus and provide a place for cultural exchange, inviting the wider university community, visitors, local residents, and schoolchildren to learn about and celebrate Native traditions. The center will also feature a prominent sculpture garden, additional display space for Native art, and a performance space for cultural and musical programs.

“This center is not just for Native students, but for the whole community. It will be a place of gathering. There will be academic and cultural activities and space for other types of class; we think of it as a gift to the state of Montana.”

- WALTER FLEMING, CHAIR OF MSU’S NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT
A $25,000 matching grant from the SMSC to the Lakota Waldorf School, located in the heart of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, will help finance a much-needed community and classroom building for K-3 students, teachers, staff, families, and the wider community. Having spent the last 20 years in modular buildings, staff members are hoping the expansion will allow the school to serve more children on the Pine Ridge Reservation and eventually house K-8 students. The building will also model green construction and renewable energy for the community. With the SMSC’s support, the Lakota Waldorf School will continue to revive the Lakota language and culture and create a better future for Native children.
FORT TOTTEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDS FIRST NET-ZERO SCHOOL ON TRIBAL LAND

Despite a devastating waterline rupture in 2016 that destroyed much of the building that housed Fort Totten's alternative high school and career and technical education program, the Spirit Lake Nation remained resilient in their efforts to not only rebuild, but also improve the facility's sustainability by adding solar panels to the roof. Located on the Spirit Lake Reservation in North Dakota, Four Winds Community School in the Fort Totten school district is the first net-zero energy school in Indian Country.

"The new school will expand the educational experience that students have at Four Winds High School by offering an alternative program and career technology education," said Jeff Olson, superintendent of Fort Totten Public Schools. "This building is about the future. We're not only preparing our students for the future, but we also designed this building for the future by using the earth respectfully and efficiently to power the school."

Thanks to a $194,000 grant from the SMSC, the school will have a low-energy profile and will generate its own electricity for lighting, heating, and cooling. The grant money funded the facility's solar panels, with additional money used for technology equipment for labs and classrooms, including SMART Boards and projectors.
With bitterly cold winds and heavy snow, waiting for the school bus in the Midwest can be a trying experience. Minneapolis Public Schools and the Division of Indian Work provided more than 800 Native American students with warm coats last winter, thanks in part to a $30,000 donation from the SMSC.

The Division of Indian Work and Minneapolis Public Schools have coordinated an annual coat drive for more than a decade, helping students from kindergartners to high schoolers. Coats are distributed at the end of November, a time of year when many families can use extra help before the holidays. “Their child is going to be safe waiting for the bus in the cold, or can go outside and enjoy and play,” said Louise Matson, executive director of the Division of Indian Work. “It’s a necessity here in Minnesota.”

“Families come in and see tables piled high with various-sized coats. We see children’s faces light up, hear the echoes of thanks from appreciative parents, and observe dedicated staff and volunteers doing what they love—serving the members of our community. We witness firsthand the difference the SMSC makes in these families’ lives.”

- LOUISE MATSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DIVISION OF INDIAN WORK, AND ANNA ROSS, DIRECTOR OF INDIAN EDUCATION FOR MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Each year, One in the Spirit, in collaboration with the
Department of Indian Work, Saint Paul Area Council of
Churches, and the Saint Paul Public Schools Indian Education
Program, provides gift cards to Native American students to
purchase new coats, jackets, scarves, mittens, gloves, hats,
boots, and leggings. With the help of a $20,000 donation from
the SMSC, the organizations supplied 1,020 Native students in
the Saint Paul Public School District with warm winter clothing.

The Siembra Montessori Program at the Centro Tyrone
Guzman School is a licensed and nationally accredited
dual language learning center for Hispanic children ages 2
to 6 years old. The program supports kids as they explore
the world, grow, and learn—in both English and Spanish.

At Eagle Creek Elementary School, the SMSC’s $2,500
helped each age group raise garden beds for outdoor
learning. The gardening program was funded to help
children develop new skills and learn about science and
nature through hands-on activities.

Whether children are exploring in the classroom or
exploring nature, the SMSC is happy to help youth learn
through interactive experiences.

Children learn best when interacting with the world around
them. In fiscal year 2017, the SMSC donated $2,500 to
Eagle Creek Elementary School in Shakopee, Minnesota, and
$795 to the Centro Tyrone Guzman School in Minneapolis,
to help both parties teach young children through hands-on
activities and experiences.

The SMSC is an intertribal, interfaith ministry that
serves the needs of Native families in Saint Paul and the
surrounding areas. “It is not possible to express in words
the joy this project brings to the children, their parents,
and their grandparents, some of whom are raising their
grandchildren,” said Reverend Jennie Lightfoot, pastor
at One in the Spirit. “These funds will ensure our Native
youth are prepared for the cold winters in Minnesota.”
Today’s youth will be the leaders of tomorrow. To prepare them, the SMSC donates funds each year to educational initiatives, including an endowed scholarship fund at the University of Minnesota. In 2017, the SMSC awarded a $500,000 grant to the scholarship program in an effort to prepare the next generation of Native Americans for wherever the future may take them. For the last decade, the SMSC Endowed Scholarship has benefited more than 200 first-year and transfer Native American students with demonstrated financial need.

The scholarship program was established in 2008 through a $2.5 million gift from the SMSC. The University of Minnesota matches the interest earned on this endowment fund with proceeds dedicated to providing scholarships for Native American students. This program is part of the SMSC’s efforts to help advance Indian Country for generations to come.

“The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Endowed Scholarship has had a profound impact on its recipients, giving them the latitude to spend more time studying and less time worrying about how to pay for college as they juggle the demands of school, work, and families.”

- Eric W. Kaler, President of the University of Minnesota
COLLEGE-BOUND NATIVE STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The average college completion rate for Native American students is a staggering 18 percent nationwide, compared to 55 percent for non-Native students. Catching the Dream, a national scholarship and school improvement program for Native people, helps college students achieve their dreams. The organization, based out of New Mexico, works in collaboration with other groups concerned with improving Native American education. Catching the Dream provides supplementary scholarship funding for students who have received financial assistance from other sources.

In April 2017, the SMSC provided a $10,000 grant to Catching the Dream to be used for scholarships for high-potential Native American college students. These scholarships were awarded to students pursuing degrees in STEM-related fields, including math, engineering, science, business, education, and computer science. Catching the Dream opens doors of opportunity to Native students who may not otherwise have had the chance to attend college.

SHAKOPEE DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

THE GIFT OF EDUCATION: PRICELESS

Rising costs are closing doors to higher education for many students around the nation. Since 1979, Shakopee Dollars for Scholars has given scholarship grants to 2,830 students in the Shakopee area to help reduce the cost of post-secondary education. The organization has awarded more than $1.28 million to Shakopee-area students.

In 2017, the SMSC contributed $10,000 to Shakopee Dollars for Scholars, making a difference in the lives of several students. “With generous support from the SMSC and others, we will continue our mission to provide financial assistance and community support for future generations of scholars,” said Ray Hussong, president of the Shakopee Dollars for Scholars chapter. “These donations help motivate our young people to continue their education.”
Today’s high rate of unemployment on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming prompted Wind River Tribal College to offer a unique scholarship opportunity to interested tribal members. With the local economy in mind and an increasing demand for school bus drivers, the college hosted two Class A Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) courses in fall 2017, thanks in part to a $10,000 donation from the SMSC. “We feel elated for the students who will benefit from the assistance the donation will provide,” said Marlin Spoonhunter, the school’s president. “This is the first time in a long time we are able to have a course like this on the Wind River Reservation.”

The donation will allow 10 students to receive $1,000 to apply toward their tuition for the CDL class, which is required to operate a school bus. Upon completion of the course, students will have marketable skills to offer when seeking employment in the area and be able to help meet transportation needs on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Increasing the employment rate on the reservation is expected to boost the tribe’s local economy and benefit the school districts in the area by providing trained CDL school bus drivers.
In 1879, an Omaha court declared Standing Bear to be a person accorded the legal rights of all people, a landmark decision that has been the basis for many federal policy changes. Honoring this victory for justice and equal rights, the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs (NCIA) offers Chief Standing Bear Scholarships for Native students. The SMSC provided the NCIA with a $15,000 matching grant in support of these scholarships. With the grant, the NCIA hopes to establish an endowment fund for the Chief Standing Bear Scholarships to ensure the organization can continue to award scholarships indefinitely to Native students in order to develop generations of future leaders.

Over the past decade, 30 Chief Standing Bear Scholarships totaling $40,000 have been awarded to outstanding Native students. The NCIA serves off-reservation Native American communities in Nebraska by helping assure they are afforded the right to equitable opportunities in the areas of housing, employment, education, health care, economic development, and human/civil rights. The commission's goals are accomplished through advocacy, education, and the promotion of legislation.

According to ancient tribal history, the Crow people often attribute their cultural strength to the wisdom of lisaaxpuaatuhchee, or the Little Big Horn Ram. Today, a Montana school proudly bears the name Little Big Horn College and uses the mascot, Rams and Lady Rams, in sports, academic competitions, and as an insignia. The SMSC donated $5,000 to the college's athletic program to provide scholarships to student athletes. These scholarships will help students focus on their education and athletics without having to worry about acquiring funds to pay for schooling and other expenses.

“The staff here in the athletics department are aware of the level of poverty that the majority of our students come from here on the Crow Reservation, as well as surrounding reservations, so one of our main goals is to ensure our students have a nice, clean facility and campus and a quality education.”

- GERNELL KILLSNIGHT, WOMEN’S HEAD BASKETBALL COACH AT LITTLE BIG HORN COLLEGE
Dunwoody College of Technology provides opportunities for men and women of all backgrounds to build rewarding careers in high-demand, high-paying fields. Degrees are available in STEM-related fields, such as computer technology, design and graphics technology, construction sciences, and robotics.

For more than a decade, the SMSC has supported scholarships for Native American students at the college. The SMSC contributed $15,000 to Dunwoody College in 2017 to be used for three scholarships for full-time Native American students with demonstrated financial need.

“The advancements we have made can be attributed in many ways to donors like [the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community] who have supported Dunwoody College’s mission. Scholarship support in particular helps make a Dunwoody education more accessible and affordable for our students.”

- Stuart G. Lang, Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Dunwoody College of Technology
HEALTH DONATIONS
Minnesota hosted Super Bowl LII in 2018. Leading up to the event in February 2018, the Super Bowl Legacy Fund’s “52 Weeks of Giving” program helped Minnesota kids build lifelong healthy habits by providing 52 grants to 52 community projects across the state. In support of nutrition initiatives throughout Minnesota’s Native communities, the SMSC made a $300,000 contribution to the program through its Seeds of Native Health campaign.

DREAM OF WILD HEALTH
The SMSC’s first Super Bowl Legacy Fund donation was presented to the Dream of Wild Health farm in Hugo, Minnesota, in July 2017. The 10-acre organic farm works to help Native American people reclaim their physical, spiritual, and mental health through the seeds of their ancestors. The SMSC’s $50,000 donation will help the farm build an upgraded teaching kitchen, which will allow the farm to offer new programs that will reconnect Native children with culinary, spiritual, and medicinal uses of Indigenous plants.

LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE
In August 2017, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe received a $100,000 grant from the Super Bowl Legacy Fund through the SMSC to build a new mobile teaching kitchen. The kitchen will be used around the reservation to teach tribal members about the basics of good nutrition. It will also provide hands-on lessons about healthy, affordable cooking for families.

FOND DU LAC BAND OF OJIBWE
In October 2017, the Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe received an $50,000 grant to improve health and nutrition efforts. The grant funded three separate projects—an extension of a walking path near the Fond du Lac Tribal Center, updates to the community and school gardens, and the reopening of the Brookston Community Center Skating Rink.

UPPER SIOUX COMMUNITY
In November 2017, the Upper Sioux Community received a $100,000 grant to support and strengthen their healthy foods initiative, Zani Woyute. The initiative focuses on getting Upper Sioux youth involved in agriculture and food preparation while increasing food access for the entire community. The grant will support gardening, cooking, and preservation activities for youth through summer and after-school programs.

SEEDS OF NATIVE HEALTH
Seeds of Native Health is the SMSC’s multifaceted national campaign to improve Native American nutrition. The four-year, $10 million campaign provides grants to local communities and funds research, education, and capacity-building efforts.
S
ince first launching Seeds of Native Health in 2015, the SMSC has made a significant impact on the food crisis in Indian Country. But there is still more work to be done to address the nutritional disparities in Native communities. As a result, the SMSC announced an additional $5 million ($2.5 million in 2017 and $2.5 million in 2018) in new funding to its Seeds of Native Health campaign, raising its overall funding to $10 million over four years. Seeds of Native Health is the single-largest coordinated philanthropic effort in American history focused on improving Native American nutrition.

"Most of Indian Country is in a dietary health crisis, caused by food access problems and contributing to the worst health disparities of any group of Americans," said SMSC Chairman Charles R. Vig. "For the past two years, our tribe has collaborated with many health partners and helped launch promising new solutions, but a great deal of work remains to be done, and we are committed to continuing to address this crisis."

The new funding will continue to support the development of initiatives to improve Native health, foodways, food sovereignty, early childhood development, and economic self-reliance. The additional funds will also support three new projects involving collaborations with the American Diabetes Association, Better Way Foundation, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, and the University of Minnesota.

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION
Diabetes is the fourth leading cause of death among Native Americans, with almost 16 percent of Native Americans diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. To help promote healthy eating behaviors, the SMSC is providing $225,000 to the American Diabetes Association to adapt its "What Can I Eat” program in a culturally appropriate way for Native American communities. This program, which has experienced success in rural and urban African-American communities, focuses on diabetes self-management through informative resources about healthy eating, grocery shopping, cooking, eating out, and more.

BETTER WAY FOUNDATION AND CENTER FOR INDIAN COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT
The three-way partnership between the SMSC, Better Way Foundation, and the Center for Indian Country Development has brought about the “Healthy Children, Healthy Nations” initiative, which seeks to improve early childhood nutrition in Native American communities in Minnesota. Through their research efforts, the three parties aim to identify and implement a definitive action plan for improving Native childhood nutrition, with the hope of expanding their ultimate model throughout Indian Country.
“Native children face larger disparities in education, health, income, and access to basic services and opportunities than any other child population in the United States,” said Ian Widmer, chair of the Better Way Foundation board of directors. “Investing in Native early childhood development and nutrition programs can improve cognitive development and help reverse these disturbing trends.”

**AMERICORPS VISTA**

The SMSC partnered with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative to create a cadre of “Native Food Sovereignty Fellows.” The 21 initial participants will be AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers working in teams in 10 low-resource Native American communities to establish and stabilize food sovereignty efforts, food systems, and tribal economies that build economic opportunities around food and agriculture. The SMSC provided a $200,000 gift to fund the cost-share for VISTA members’ living allowance in the first year of the program. This represents the first time in VISTA’s 52-year history in which a tribe is providing funding to deploy VISTA members nationally.

- **81%** of Native Americans are overweight or obese  
  [Source: American Indian Health Survey, 2014]

- **15.9%** of Native Americans suffer from Type 2 diabetes, more than double the number of Caucasians  
  [Source: American Diabetes Association, 2012]

- **24%** of Native American households are below the federal poverty line, compared to 15% of the U.S. population as a whole  
  [Source: PEW Research Center, 2014]

Learn more about the SMSC’s efforts to improve Native American nutrition by visiting [SEEDSOFNATIVEHEALTH.ORG](http://SEEDSOFNATIVEHEALTH.ORG)
When Recreation and Fitness Resources (RFR) took over operations at the Bayfield Area Recreation Center in 2006, the Bayfield, Wisconsin, facility had been running at a $150,000 annual loss. Since then, the nonprofit organization has cut the facility’s energy use by 40 percent, created new fundraisers, obtained grants, and completed 10 fiscal years without debt. The rec center’s membership has also grown 18 percent in 2016 and has been especially popular with members of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, who use the facility for a variety of health and exercise programs.

To help support the health goals of families from Red Cliff Family Services, the SMSC donated $5,000 for classes and membership for Red Cliff children and to help tribal members establish a long-term exercise program through the facility’s First Steps to Fitness program. Given the health challenges faced by the Red Cliff community—including increased rates of diabetes, obesity, and heart and liver disease—the ability to use the RFR facility is a great tool to promote the benefits of regular exercise to overall health and well-being.
Established in 1985 on the Crow Creek Sioux Indian Reservation in Fort Thompson, South Dakota, Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc., reduces violence and provides safety to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

To empower victims to experience healing and wholeness while ensuring that each woman gains a sense of self-worth, the group purchased a motel to be used as a designated refuge for victims of human trafficking. With a $25,000 matching grant from the SMSC, the organization will be able pay down its mortgage loans for the space and continue providing Native women with resources to escape situations of violence and learn life skills to help them live independently and achieve their full potential.
Affecting more than 29 million Americans in the United States, the issue of diabetes has reached epidemic proportions and is particularly prevalent in Indian Country. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Native Americans and Alaska Native adults are 2.3 times more likely to have been diagnosed with diabetes compared with non-Hispanic whites. To raise awareness of diabetes prevention and support research for a cure, the SMSC contributed $10,000 to the American Diabetes Association’s 2017 Evening with the Stars gala event held at Prairie Island Indian Community’s Treasure Island Resort and Casino in Minnesota.

“[The SMSC’s] gift will help us get closer to curing diabetes and better treatments for those living with diabetes,” said Susan Klimek, Minnesota and North Dakota area executive director for the American Diabetes Association. “We are very grateful for the support from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and our continued partnership.”

### DIABETES BY THE NUMBERS:

- **29.1** million U.S. adults have diabetes—1 out of 4 of them don’t know they have it
- Estimated **30%** of Native Americans are prediabetic
- Native Americans and Alaska Natives are **2.2** times more likely to develop diabetes
- At least **1** out of **3** people will develop diabetes in their lifetime
- **Risk of death for adults with diabetes is 50%** higher than for adults without diabetes

(Sources: CDC.gov and Diabetes.org)
IN-KIND DONATIONS
IN-KIND DONATIONS
Over the course of 13 years, the SMSC donated hundreds of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to countless tribes, first responders, and government agencies. In 2017, the SMSC capped off the AED donation program, known as Mdewakanton LIFE, with its 1,000th AED donation. The donation provided the Prior Lake Police Department, one of the SMSC’s neighbors, with 14 new AEDs.

Mdewakanton LIFE was an initiative started by the SMSC in 2004 with the goal of saving lives. Through the initiative, that goal has been achieved on at least 28 occasions. Although no monetary value can be placed on saving a life, each AED is worth approximately $1,985—making the SMSC’s total AED donations through Mdewakanton LIFE worth nearly $2 million.

“Through Mdewakanton LIFE, we are able to be good partners and good neighbors. Even if they only save one life, these donations are always worth it.”

- KEITH B. ANDERSON, SMSC VICE-CHAIRMAN
SMSC PROVIDES GREATER COMMUNITY ACCESS TO HEALTHY, ORGANIC FOOD

Access to nutritious food is key to living a happy, healthy life. In Scott County, Minnesota, many families do not have the funds necessary to purchase nourishing foods. To help provide for the health needs of 19 families in Scott County, the SMSC gave each family a share from the SMSC’s Wozupi Tribal Gardens’ tribally supported agriculture (TSA) program.

Wozupi’s TSA program, much like other farms’ community supported agriculture programs, offers members of the greater community the option to purchase full and half shares from the farm. The summer program, which runs for 18 weeks from June through October, provides a box full of various fresh, organic produce each week. The 19 families’ donated shares have a total monetary value of nearly $10,000.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES PROVIDED WITH TRAINING SPACE

In fall 2016, the TriCounty Chargers, a powerlifting Special Olympics team from Scott County, Minnesota, were in need of an adequate practice facility. The SMSC, which has supported Special Olympics teams in the past, donated space and equipment at the tribe’s fitness club, Dakotah! Sport and Fitness, for the team to use once a week during the powerlifting season.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide athletes with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy—and the SMSC helped this goal become a reality for the local team. Two TriCounty Chargers athletes received gold medals at the state competition, one received a silver medal, and several others set personal records.

“Your generosity, by allowing us to use space in your incredible facility every Saturday during our training season, was a key element in this success. It not only provided us ample equipment and space to broaden our training program, but it gave our team a sense of security and consistency.”

- BRIAN KREEGER, COACH OF THE TRICOUNTY CHARGERS
PURE, CLEAN WATER DONATIONS QUENCH THIRST

Water is medicine in Dakota culture. Throughout 2017, the SMSC donated more than 390 cases of bottled water, as well as 140 four-gallon jugs of *Mni Yuska*—pure and clean water. All of the water came from the SMSC’s water bottling facility.

SMSC Water Bottling provides the SMSC’s enterprises, departments, and customers throughout the community with fresh, high-quality water that is bottled locally. Through these donations, the SMSC was able to share clean water with those in need.

DONATED COMPOST BENEFITS MINNESOTA ORGANIZATIONS

In fiscal year 2017, the SMSC donated organic compost to several organizations throughout Minnesota, including the Minnesota Food Association, the Elders Lodge in Saint Paul, and the Urban Farming Coalition in Minneapolis. Respectively, these organizations build sustainable food systems, provide soothing care for elders, and improve food access for those living in the Twin Cities. The value of the three donations totaled more than $10,000—and the compost came from the SMSC Organics Recycling Facility.

The SMSC Organics Recycling Facility turns organic materials that would have been otherwise sent to a landfill into organic compost, compost blends, and mulch. The SMSC Organics Recycling Facility accepts yard waste from Scott County neighbors free of charge—adding to the Community’s mission to be a good neighbor and a good steward of the earth.
MOBILE UNIT PROVIDES HEALTH SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES IN NEED

For a decade, a massive 18-wheel semi has been pulling up to communities to provide a variety of health services. This semi, called the SMSC Mobile Unit, offers free mammograms, diabetes education and screenings, dental cleanings, eye exams, and more to those who are not able to access care.

The Mobile Unit removes the barrier to adequate health access for many in need and provides potentially lifesaving screenings. Since the Mobile Unit was launched in 2007, it has been deployed more than 600 times and has served approximately 10,000 people. The Mobile Unit is unique in that it can be transformed into a clinic for any of its offered services—one day it may operate as a dental clinic, the next it could be a vision clinic.

“Our Mobile Unit provides so many great services to those in need. Many families depend on the Mobile Unit’s visits to their communities, and we couldn’t be happier to help.”

- JOANNA BRYANT, SMSC WELLNESS ADMINISTRATOR
Local Community Donations
SCOTT COUNTY BOOK MOBILE

BOOKS ON THE GO

To support literacy in communities surrounding the SMSC, the tribe contributed a $50,000 matching grant to Scott County for a book mobile, library materials, and technology. The funds will provide books, programs, and services to 140,000 Scott County residents who might not have otherwise had access to these resources. “The [SMSC] has given us a great opportunity to serve the community,” said Jacob Grussing, Scott County library director.

The book mobile will house an array of children and adult books and be utilized by school districts, public health organizations, and community education programs.
If not for the Southern Valley Alliance for Battered Women (SVABW), resources that specifically address domestic violence or provide services to battered women and their families would be scarce in Scott County. In 2017, the SMSC donated $7,000 to support SVABW’s annual fundraiser, held at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in April. The organization raised more than $100,000 for county resources at the event.

The SVABW provides a crisis line, criminal justice intervention, legal advocacy, weekly support groups, community education, and dating violence awareness presentations.

In 2016, the Southern Valley Alliance for Battered Women provided:

- Crisis line and criminal justice intervention services to 731 victims of domestic abuse
- Legal advocacy for battered women at 52 civil and criminal court appearances
- Weekly support groups with a total attendance of 363 battered women
- Community education to 3,138 adults
- Dating violence awareness presentations to 966 school-age students

Thousands of people attend the Scott County Fair each year in Minnesota. In 2017, the SMSC, located in Scott County, provided a $2,500 sponsorship for the Minnesota Shorthorn Show, an event where livestock are exhibited and judged on certain phenotypical breed traits as specified by their respective breed standard.

The crew from Mdewakanton Public Safety was also on hand during the fair and provided emergency services, including first responders, paramedics, and firefighters throughout the weekend.
Facilitating community partnerships is one way the SMSC strives to be a good neighbor in Scott County. In 2017, the SMSC donated $20,000 to a local initiative called Families and Individuals Sharing Hope (FISH) for training materials and classes to educate partners and volunteers on how to respond to needs in the surrounding community. FISH partners represent the religious sector, local governments, educational institutions, service organizations, nonprofits, and businesses that serve Scott County residents. They believe in the power of partnership to best meet the needs within their county.

When registered FISH partners encounter needs that they cannot fill, they can post the need of the individual or family on the FISH network. Once approved by FISH, registered partners review the need and determine if they can fill it. Funds from the SMSC are allocated for training materials and classes for new partners joining FISH. The organization's goal is to add 100 new partners over the next year.

**COMMON NEEDS THAT ARISE IN SCOTT COUNTY INCLUDE:**

- Access to healthy foods
- Adequate housing
- Children and family services
- Clothing and personal care items
- Disability services
- Employment opportunities
- Furniture and household items
- Health care
- Legal services
- Support for those in recovery
- Transportation
TOKATA LEARNING CENTER AND MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

ART FOSTERS POSITIVE OUTLET FOR NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH

Art education draws on a range of skills and abilities that encourage the development of study, social, and personal skills in addition to specific artistic techniques. This multifaceted approach is an integral component in many art departments and programming, including the Tokata Learning Center (TLC), an alternative education program serving the Twin Cities south metro, and the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD).

"While students are encouraged to create using many different mediums, they often choose to use clay," said Dee Buros, TLC’s American Indian education coordinator. In fiscal year 2017, the SMSC donated $1,400 to the school to purchase a replacement kiln for art classes. TLC serves students in grades 9-12 in the Shakopee school district and surrounding communities.

The SMSC also provided a $3,000 matching grant in support of the arts for the Greenway Little Earth Arts Project (Greenway LEAP) in Minneapolis, a collaboration to provide college-readiness programming for Native American youth in Minnesota. Greenway LEAP is a joint project between Little Earth of United Tribes, the Midtown Greenway Coalition, and MCAD to create public art along the Midtown Greenway in South Minneapolis. Upon raising matching funds, the mural was completed and installed in summer 2017. The Greenway LEAP project gave Native youth from Little Earth the opportunity to work with mentors from MCAD in every facet of the project.

Through the SMSC’s contributions, Native students from Little Earth and Tokata Learning Center were granted the opportunity to build real world skills and create something they can be proud of.
VETERAN DONATIONS
VETERAN DONATIONS
When their van was totaled in a car crash in November 2016, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Kit Fox Society from South Dakota, was without a reliable vehicle. The SMSC responded quickly, donating a 2017 Chevrolet Express Van, valued at more than $28,000, to help the group travel to the many events they attend.

The Sisseton-Wahpeton Kit Fox Society is a group of Native American veterans from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate tribe in northeastern South Dakota. The group provides military honors for a variety of events that celebrate Native American veterans and culture, including the annual SMSC Wacipi and Memorial Day ceremony.
ARMED FORCES SERVICES CENTER

MILITARY SUPPORT SYSTEM CONTINUES TO SERVE TRAVELING VETS

When active-duty military personnel or veterans arrive at the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Airport, they are greeted with a smile and open arms by the Armed Forces Services Center (AFSC). In fiscal year 2017, the SMSC awarded the AFSC $5,000 to help fund the services they provide American heroes.

The AFSC has provided support to more than 800,000 active-duty military personnel, veterans, and their families since the organization’s inception. The facility, which is open 365 days a year in the airport, provides free food, shelter, and hospitality, and helps coordinate the arrivals of fallen service members. The SMSC’s donation will help fund the AFSC’s supplies, maintenance, and other expenses.

AFSC BY THE NUMBERS:

- 810,655 active-duty military have received support from the AFSC
- 63,127 military dependents have passed through the AFSC since 9/11
- 1,233 retired veterans have been served since November 2015
- The facility has approximately 180 dedicated volunteers
- The facility is open 24/7, 365 days a year
Native American Veterans Assistance

Providing Necessary Assistance to Native American Veterans

The Native American Veterans Assistance (NAV A) organization, recently established in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, provides Native American veterans with quality care and much-needed aid. The volunteer-run organization provides veterans with many necessities, such as soap, shampoo, clothing, backpacks, and sleeping bags.

In June 2017, the SMSC donated $5,000 to support the organization. Not only will this funding help NAV A provide Native American veterans with basic necessities, but it will also help them distribute food to veterans programs and pantries on reservations. NAV A also works with a Pine Ridge wood vendor to provide lumber to help elderly veterans heat their homes.

Native Veterans Honor Flight

Honor Flights Provide Native Veterans with Closure

Enrollment in military service is an indisputable act of bravery and leadership. Sadly, many of the men and women who fight for this country make the ultimate sacrifice to allow others the enjoyment of freedom and prosperity. To pay homage to the service and sacrifice of these brave individuals, veterans participate in honor flights to Washington, D.C., to visit veterans memorials. In June 2017, the SMSC provided Native American veterans from North Dakota with a $5,000 donation to conduct honor flights of their own.

Native veterans from five North Dakota tribes will participate in these honor flights, including the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa; the Spirit Lake Nation; Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation; the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; and Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation. Each honor flight consists of 90 Native veterans, many of whom have never had the chance to visit the veterans memorials made to honor them and to provide them with closure.

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The need for assistance is not uncommon for many veterans across the United States. Veterans who return home to the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation have an unemployment rate of around 65 percent—many of whom reach out to the Rocky Boy Veterans Center (RBVC) for direction and support.

In April 2017, the SMSC donated $5,000 to the Rocky Boy Veterans Center to help fund their Veterans Support Services program. The donation will specifically impact female and elderly veterans who require housing improvements. Through this donation, the SMSC is providing Rocky Boy veterans with much-needed support.

Due to the high unemployment rate, the RBVC provides more than 100 unemployed veterans who have returned home to the reservation with information, education, and job support. The RBVC helps veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs health care benefits they receive, links them to job services and training/employment opportunities, and provides them with overall support resources.
YOUTH DONATIONS
To help prevent a summertime slump, the Little Priest Tribal College Library in Winnebago, Nebraska, hosted a summer reading program for 25 community children. The SMSC donated $3,000 in support of the program.

The program, titled "Build a Better World," encouraged children to read for pleasure during the summer months to help retain their reading skills. The SMSC’s donation helped the program provide books, snacks, crafting supplies, prizes, T-shirts, and bookmarks, all of which encouraged the kids to continue turning the page.

LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE

SUMMER PROGRAM ENCOURAGES YOUTH TO CONTINUE READING
DAKOTA WICOHAN

YOUTH PROGRAM PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES WITH SMSC SUPPORT

Quality youth programming helps children grow into future leaders. However, Native youth living in Morton, Minnesota, near the Lower Sioux Reservation, did not have access to year-round youth programs. In September, the SMSC donated $5,000 to Dakota Wicohan, an organization that supports the community’s only youth program outside of school, Dakota Itancanpi Kte Unkihdawiyapi, or Dakota Youth Leadership Program.

The SMSC’s donation will help fund the Dakota Youth Leadership Program’s cultural programming, such as summer camp, sunktanka (horse) care, the Dakota 38+2 ride, and travel for lacrosse games and horses. The program, which serves 50 Dakota youth and young adults ages 10-21, works to increase community connections, ground youth in Dakota culture, and improve leadership skills and overall well-being.
Indian Youth of America (IYA)

**Summer Camps Provide Fun Experiences for Many Native Youth**

For 40 years, Indian Youth of America (IYA) has given Native youth the opportunity to attend weeklong summer camps around the country. In 2017, the organization hosted two camps—one in Prescott, Arizona, and the other in the Black Hills of South Dakota. As a long-time supporter of IYA for more than two decades, the SMSC donated $25,000 to IYA for summer camps in 2017.

Based out of Sioux City, Iowa, youth camps have been the lifeblood of IYA since its inception. These camps, which provide positive cultural, educational, and recreational activities, expose many Native youth between ages 10-14 to a world of new experiences and friends. Designed specifically for Native youth, the first IYA camp was developed in 1976 because many Native children had never had the opportunity to attend summer camp due to costs and other factors.

Today, IYA camps host Native youth, many of whom come from foster families and group homes, or who have been victims of abuse, neglect, and poverty. The camps help young adults grow and develop through a number of fun activities, such as cultural activities, campfires, canoeing, hiking, sports, swimming, and more. Not only do the camps help underprivileged youth attend summer camps, but they also provide camp counselor employment to many Native high school and college graduates.
To teach Native American and Alaska Native youth about environmental awareness, the SMSC donated a $25,000 matching grant to United National Indian Tribal Youth’s (UNITY) Earth Ambassador Leadership Program. The program, which began in summer 2017, will provide up to 25 Native youth with nine months of personal growth activities and opportunities for them to help find solutions to issues in their communities, such as improving water quality and introducing more sustainable farm practices.

UNITY’s mission is to strengthen youth involvement in Indian Country. The Earth Ambassador Leadership Program will build off of that mission and encourage future Native leaders to carry out eco-friendly projects, learn about environmental issues, and practice stewardship of Indian Country’s natural resources. The SMSC’s donation will help fund airfare and lodging for the youth participating, as well as for the two trainers attending.

“The SMSC’s matching grant will help further UNITY’s mission, which is to foster the spiritual, mental, social, and physical development of American Indian and Alaska Native youth and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement.”

- MARY KIM TITLA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNITY
The warmth and security of a pair of shoes, clothing, and housing is too often taken for granted. Samaritan’s Feet, a nonprofit organization based out of Charlotte, North Carolina, and HOPE 4 Youth, a nonprofit organization in Anoka, Minnesota, have spent years dedicating time and resources to improving the lives of youth both locally and nationally.

In fiscal year 2017, the SMSC donated $1,000 to support a Samaritan’s Feet mission in Sioux County, North Dakota. Of the 1,700 children ages 18 and under living in Sioux County, 87 percent are of Native American descent. More than 1,000 of those children live in low-income families. Samaritan’s Feet donated 500 pairs of shoes to youth ages 6-18 in this group.

From 2012 to 2016, the number of homeless minors in Minnesota under the age of 18 increased by up to 46 percent. To help combat this problem, the SMSC provided $1,000 in donations to support HOPE 4 Youth. The donations helped fund the organization’s Drop-In Resource Center, which provides homeless and impoverished youth with housing, food, and clothing, among other resources.

Families living under difficult circumstances are often forced to make tough decisions regarding their child’s wants and needs. With a majority of low-income families spending their money on basic needs, it can be a struggle to provide youth with proper clothing and housing for the Midwest weather. Samaritan’s Feet and HOPE 4 Youth, with the help of the SMSC, are making an effort to improve the lives of children living in Sioux County, North Dakota, and throughout the State of Minnesota.

THE NEED FOR ASSISTANCE IN SIOUX COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA:

- Of nearly 1,700 children ages 18 and under in Sioux County, 87.7% (1,503) self-identify as Native American or Alaska Native
- 70% of all Sioux County children lived in low-income families in 2016
- 45% of children were considered to live in poverty, while 26% were considered to live in extreme poverty

(Source: Samaritan’s Feet, 2017)
Creating a bond with Unci Maka—which means Grandmother Earth in the Dakota language—is important in Dakota culture. Through a $6,000 donation to Star Lake Wilderness Camp to expand outreach to disadvantaged populations, the SMSC provided the opportunity for many Native youth to create that bond.

Located in Pequot Lakes, Minnesota, the camp allows populations with limited resources to experience a summer camp that they may not have otherwise been able to attend. Of the 85-100 campers that attend each year, 50 percent are Native. The camp hosts fishing, hiking, and canoeing activities, and teaches youth about basic camping skills. Through the camp, youth have the opportunity to create a bond with Unci Maka, as well as with one another.

Teach youth about...
- Acceptance of themselves and others
- The value of adventure
- The Creator
- Basic camping skills
- Responsibility
- Stewardship for the earth
- Respect for others and themselves
HAYS-LODGE POLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GIVING CHILDREN A SAFE PLACE TO PLAY

Spend time on the playground is a great way for little ones to get the exercise their growing bodies need. The Hays-Lodge Pole Elementary School, located on the Fort Belknap Reservation in Hays, Montana, did not have enough playground equipment near the school for the number of students living in the district. The SMSC donated $5,000 to improve the physical activity of Native children on the reservation by building a new playground. The playground will be constructed with the help of Carter’s Kids, a nonprofit that encourages physical activity to fight childhood obesity.

Living in an area where outdoor activities are popular, such as fishing, hiking, and relay racing, children from infant to preteen ages lack a place to participate in physical activity with family and friends. The new playground will provide Hays-Lodge Pole students with a safe place to play within walking distance of their homes.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN RECOVERY

TRANSPORTATION MADE AVAILABLE FOR MINNESOTA YOUTH IN RECOVERY

When in recovery, daily physical and internal struggles can make getting around a difficulty. For many youth residing in Scott and Carver counties in Minnesota, transportation is no longer a worry. In April 2017, the SMSC donated $5,000 for bus passes to Young People in Recovery (YPR), an organization that empowers young people seeking to live a life free of addiction.

Thousands of kids receive help from YPR throughout the year, and they commonly lack reliable transportation. Along with helping young people get to school, work, and meetings, YPR also helps youth in or seeking recovery obtain stable employment, secure suitable housing, explore education options, and connect with others in recovery through fun outings, such as group trips, local sporting events, and art performances.

Young People in Recovery’s mission is to provide hope to local youth and abolish the stigma of recovery, and the SMSC is happy to support them every step of the way.
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Playground Dream Becomes a Reality for Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Strong, confident youth are vital for a community to thrive—and there’s no better place for youth to grow and learn than on a playground. The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in Cass Lake, Minnesota, did not have adequate recreational spaces. Their playground was aging and unsafe, and their community gym was outdated, inadequate, and often unavailable because it was also used as a community gathering space. To help the tribe address these issues, the SMSC provided the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe with a $75,000 grant to build a new playground.

The Cass Lake community is home to nearly 1,400 children under the age of 18. Because of this group’s limited access to recreational facilities, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe felt a new playground was necessary, and reached out to the SMSC and Carter’s Kids. With the two donors’ help, a centrally located playground was built in 2017 to provide youth with a safe and healthy environment for outdoor activities. The new playground, which features custom playground equipment and basketball courts, gives youth the opportunity to build strong bodies, confidence, and self-esteem that will serve them throughout their lives. Not only is the playground available for all community youth, but it is also all-inclusive, providing equipment for children with mobility needs or other challenges.
The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community is a federally recognized, sovereign Native American tribe located southwest of Minneapolis/St. Paul. Following a Dakota tradition of generosity, the SMSC is one of the top philanthropists in Minnesota and is the largest contributor to Native American tribes and causes across the country. It is a strong community partner and a leader in protecting and restoring natural resources. The SMSC’s government, Gaming Enterprise, and various other enterprises are collectively the largest employer in Scott County.
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