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SIOUX VALLEY DAKOTA NATION COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Events and Activities at Sioux Valley
Dakota Nation

Intergovernmental Relations and Implementation

The Intergovernmental Relations and Implementation Department (IRID) staff has moved to the new Governance Building on the second floor. Also located on our floor are the Human Resources and Employment and Training Departments. We look forward to hosting the community when the public health orders allow for in person gathering.

As we continue to monitor and comply with Public Health orders, we have had to move our committee meetings and community engagement to online forums. Our next online forum will be held on Monday, February 14, 2022, from 6-8 pm, this session is open to all SVDN members to hear an update of the various initiatives from our department and the committee work. There will be opportunity to dialogue with Staff and Committee members during this session.

Our office developed proposals for training for our Program Managers and Staff. Recently completed training included Leadership Centred Skill Training and Project Management. Beginning in January we will continue with Workplace Health and Safety, Certification in Indigenous Human Resources, Financial Management, Strategic Planning How-To, Indigenous Toastmasters. The goal is to build capacity of our members and those that work in key management positions to better lead our organization and services for our community.

Projects Update

The Lands Research Project Phase II completed 26 land interviews with SVDN members in 2021. The researchers and mappers are now undertaking analysis of this information to validate and build upon the information collected in Phase I. A community summary is available from the Phase I report, please contact our office if you would like a copy.

The Genealogy Project remains a work in progress, the purpose is to conduct a formal study of our kinship and family trees to preserve this information for our future generations. To date we have met with 34 families who have come forward to share information on their lineage. The focus of this information is 1950's and earlier, however we can record recent information if provided. During our fall/winter community engagements the draft family trees were put up for review and validation. This is a living project that will continue to evolve as people continue to share and update their family information. Through knowledge translation we can share this with our children and youth so they can learn and strengthen kinship in the future.

The Dakota lapi II Project is in the planning stage with the hiring of personnel to oversee and implement this project. Programming will begin in March 2022 through various ways including in person and online classes, language nests, development of resources and planning for land-based camps this summer and fall. This will be a two-year project and the goal is to increase the number of beginner, intermediate, and fluent speakers of the Dakota language. The project will be guided by an Advisory Committee encompassed of interested SVDN members.

Records and Information Management

Data is important to be able to track progress towards a goal, or vision of the future. As we work to improve the well-being of the members of the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation community, it will be important that all members have a voice in defining what well-being means to them, and to the community. When we discuss “closing the gap”, we need to think of that gap as the difference between how the community sees itself today, and how it wants to see the community in the future. All efforts need to work toward that future vision. Gathering information is important to get a benchmark of the “now”, and then to measure progress toward the outcome the community wishes to see. The progress needs to align with community values, and the community needs to be involved in deciding those values. Members will be asked to provide their input in several different ways, please make your voice heard!

Climate Change & Environmental Projects

On behalf of Wipazoka Wakpa Climate Change & Environment, we would like to wish the community a Happy New Year! We will continue to grow and build upon the work we did in 2021. New and exciting initiatives will introduce more opportunities for community members to get involved, lend a helping hand, get active, and of course – learn how we can all protect the environment and ourselves against climate change. We can all do things to reduce our environmental footprint such as recycling, reusing items, buying less, reducing food waste, composting, etc. You can learn how to do all these things by participating in our events, workshops, following our Facebook page (SVDN Wipazoka Wakpa Climate Change & Environment), and joining our weekly online chats! Starting on February 2nd, every Wednesday at 7:00 PM we will host an online chat through Zoom. We want to stay connected with community members throughout the pandemic. We want to continue educating the community, as well as hear your thoughts, concerns, and priorities as we discuss new topics every Wednesday. Some of the topics we brainstormed are listed below – please feel free to share topic ideas with us too!

- What climate change is and what we're doing about it
- Recycling, reducing, reusing, restoring, and rethinking (waste minimization)
- Conserving water & long-term water security
- Energy efficiency and what you can do to conserve energy
- Food security/ food sovereignty
- Gardening
- Composting and composting with worms (vermicomposting)
- Dangerous wildlife and safety
- Learning about our ecosystem and Species-at-Risk
- ...And more!

Upcoming plans and announcements:

At our first meeting in the new year, we welcomed our newest member to the Climate Change Working Group, Thurman (Darby) Essie! During this meeting we discussed our plans for the next few months, including the idea to hold our online chats every Wednesday. Our goals for the next 2 months are:

- 1) Interview over 30 community members to discuss the climate change crisis and learn to adapt.
- 2) Draft the Wipazoka Wakpa Food Sovereignty Plan, the Plan will feature ideas and steps we can take as a community to become self-sufficient and ensure everyone has access to food in the wake of climate change.
- 3) Create our Dakota language Dictionary – the dictionary will focus on the environment.
- 4) Host the Winter Culture Camp: When its safe to hold public gatherings again, we will move forwards with our plans for the Winter Culture Camp, which we had to postpone in December due to the rise in COVID-19 cases. We will need volunteers for this event, so if you are interested, please feel free to reach out to us once we announce the dates for the 2022 Winter Culture Camp!

We have many more exciting announcements coming soon!

IRID Office Notice

The SVDN IRID staff have officially moved to the SVDN Governance Building. We request your patience with us as we get settled into our new space. The 204-855-2760 office line has not been moved to the new building. If you would like to reach any of the IRID office staff, please use the numbers/emails listed below:

Melissa Hotain – Director IRID

melissa.hotain@svdngovernance.com 204.813.4353

Carol Johnson – Implementation Coordinator

self.government@svdngovernance.com 204.819.7774

Darryl McKay – Lands Manager

lands.manager@svdngovernance.com 204.815.1153

Sandra Couling – Information Manager

sandra@svdngovernance.com 204.819.4770

Cheyenne Ironman – Climate Change

c.ironman@svdngovernance.com 204.819.5055

Jocelyn Ross – Office Manager/Admin

sg.admin@svdngovernance.com 204.813.6410

Laura Pratt – Dakota Language Law

laura.pratt@svdngovernance.com 204.819.4554

Elton Taylor – Communications Specialist

communications@svdngovernance.com 204.815.1302

Daniza DePaola – Media Production Specialist

daniza.depaola@svdngovernance.com 204.815.1302

Constitution Committee

The Constitution Committee have been meeting regularly since appointed in September 2021. The focus of the Constitution Committee is to seek input, advice, and recommendations from the Oyate in implementing the Constitution and to determine the SVDN Governance structure of the Tiospaye Representatives Council (TRC) or alternative structure such as an elder's advisory council or ward system. To communicate, review, revise and prepare for a referendum vote on the proposed amendments to the "Sioux Valley Dakota Oyate Constitution of the People."

The Constitution committee developed the following communications:

1. Briefing note to the community.
2. Summary of the Constitution.
3. Constitution Survey #1; and
4. Monthly newsletter updates.

The Constitution committee is also developing a video which summarizes the Constitution. This video is almost completed. A Constitution Survey #2 is being developed and will be posted and shared once finalized. The Constitution committee will continue to develop communication materials to inform the citizens of SVDN on the progress of the committee and participate in community engagements as required.

Representatives of the Constitution committee attended the off-reserve consultations scheduled on November 25th in Brandon and November 26th in Winnipeg. Due to the current health restrictions and increases of COVID-19, in-person engagements and consultations have been postponed.

Citizenship Committee

The Citizenship Committee was mandated to develop a Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Citizenship Transfer Policy until a Citizenship Law is approved through a community approval process. To refine and revise the draft SVDO Citizenship Law and prepare for a community approval process in 2022.

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Chief and Council re-appointed 5 SVDN citizens for the Citizenship Committee in July 2021. A call for 2 additional members was made and Darryl McKay and Candace Antoine were appointed to the Citizenship Committee. The term of the Citizenship Committee is September 2021 to September 30, 2023.

The Citizenship Committee completed a draft "SVDN Transfer Policy". This draft will be reviewed by SVDN legal and then presented to Chief and Council for final approval. All incoming band transfer requests will fall under the SVDN Transfer Policy. The Citizenship Committee also developed communication materials and attended the SVDN IRID Engagement Sessions.

The Citizenship Committee will be developing draft #2 of the proposed Citizenship Law once the SVDN Transfer Policy is reviewed and approved by the SVDN Chief and Council.

Representatives of the Citizenship Committee participated in the Community Engagement Sessions held on November 25 and November 26, 2021. Members were available to answer questions and provide information to citizens. The Citizenship Committee developed a survey to seek feedback.

Citizenship Committee representatives will be available at the February 14, 2022, IRID on-line engagement session at 6:00 pm. In-person engagements and on-line engagement sessions will continue throughout 2022.

The Reaching Home Project

Han Mitakuyapi,

The Reaching Home Project is a new program in our community that is dedicated to assisting our community members who are without a home.

Our Mission: To create lasting solutions for Sioux Valley Dakota Nation community members that help prevent and end homelessness.

To do this, we are taking a case management approach with clients and identifying the individual needs that are causing the issue. We offer support and assistance where we can to reach the goal of having a home.

The challenges each person faces differs from one person to the next, as do the resources needed. We advocate for our clients and collaborate with resources, on and off reserve, to reach our mission goal.

Types of homelessness:

- Unsheltered- someone who is living and sleeping on the streets, not including shelters utilized in the winter months.
- Emergency sheltered- Someone who is living in emergency or temporary shelters
- Provisionally accommodated- someone who is living in the home of a family member or friend temporarily, or long term. "couch surfing"
- At risk of homelessness- someone who has a home, but is facing eviction due to circumstances beyond their control.

Challenges accompanied by homelessness include but are not limited to:

- Mental health issues
- Addiction
- Lack of lifeskills
- Lack of support system
- Poverty



Reaching Home continued...

Case Management services will be provided for individuals who need ongoing support. We will work to identify the issues causing homelessness (or risk of), and the resources needed. Our services include:

- One on one support
- Case planning
- Referrals to needed resources and services
- Advocacy
- Transportation to access resources, view possible rentals, etc

Brief Services will be provided on an as needed basis. Services vary depending on the individual needs.

For further information, and/or services please contact the Case Manager by phone or email:

Teresa Wasicuna

Case Manager

204-596-8751

teresa.wasicuna@svdngovernance.com

Dakota Oyate Lodge

With the arrival of cold weather this past month, things at Dakota Oyate Lodge has been quiet. The elders have been keeping safe and warm inside the Lodge with relaxed activities. Bingo is always a favorite at the Lodge and is an activity that everyone can participate in.

Thank you to the programs that gifted poinsettias to the Elders in December, they were beautiful and enjoyed by all!

The Dakota Oyate Lodge Net Zero Feasibility Analysis has been completed. The purpose of this Net Zero Feasibility Analysis was to provide SVDN with a comprehensive picture of the Dakota Oyate Lodge's energy use combined with steps required to reduce costs and attain Net Zero status for the facility using a combination of efficiency, conservation, geothermal and PV solar. Net Zero is defined as renewably generating as much energy as the facility uses. The Net Zero Feasibility Analysis performed on the Dakota Oyate Lodge included three components and this document integrates these three reports into an interdependent systems summary.

Next month, we are looking forward to a Chinese lunch, pet therapy and cozy, winter-themed activities.

SVDN Education

Happy February,

We hope that everyone in our community is staying healthy during these COVID times.

February is here! Homework packages went out last month during the school system shut down. We hope that you and your child did some of the work packages that were delivered. We encourage houses to send in the completed work. The homework box is out, or your child can bring the work back to the school on their colour coded day. This work is important, the information will be used on the next report card. For high school students, this work can help your child to earn their credits as the final exams were sent with these packages. Please ensure that these work packages are sent back to the school as soon as possible.

We are back to 50% of students being allowed back into the school at a time. The teachers have created a plan to teach the students on their day at school and will send some work to do on their day at home. It is important that your child comes to school on their designated day. All student's households should all have colour coded stickers, orange or green in your window or located on your garbage bin showing you which day your child attends school. Calendars were delivered showing the accompanying days for your child to attend school. Match the colour coded sticker to the days shown on your calendar.

A reminder, only students arriving on the busses will be allowed to enter the school. Watch for your bus to arrive between 9:15-9:45. Dismissal happens at 2:00pm.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding the colour codes, calendar or any other question you may have.

Take care and be safe,

Sioux Valley Education Administration

