

Tribal Education Departments National Assembly



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INDIAN LAND TENURE FOUNDATION AND THE TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY JOIN FORCES TO DEVELOP INDIAN EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATERIALS AND LAND-BASED CURRICULUM

The Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILTF) has awarded the Tribal Education Departments National Assembly (TEDNA) with grant monies to develop Indian education professional development materials, and promote and market the ILTF Indian Land Tenure Curriculum.

In recognition that education of tribal youth is one of the most important areas of sovereignty, TEDNA and ILTF will spend the next year working collaboratively to create professional development materials that support the ILTF Curriculum and incorporate the Curriculum into schools across the nation.

The ILTF Curriculum was designed with Native American tribal issues and values in mind, but the context illustrates the important relationship between land and people in general, not just Native Americans. The main goal is for students to become intellectually reconnected to the land and aware of its importance to their past, present and future.

“We hope to introduce the Curriculum into schools to reestablish the relationship between land and people while focusing on Native American views of the human relationship to land. We believe that these efforts will strengthen tribal youths’ understanding of who they are as Native American people. We also believe that this can help improve school performance by increasing student self-esteem and school engagement,” said TEDNA President Quinton Roman Nose.

ILTF Program Officer, Terry Janis explains, “TEDNA is an ideal partner as it has a nationwide network of tribal education departments, private businesses and government employees working in education. Our message, one of traditional Native American land values, will reach all tiers of education.”

TEDNA is a member-based, nationwide, organization of tribal education departments, and private and governmental educational entities. Tribal education departments serve Indian communities in similar functions as state and county local education agencies by providing funding and services to kindergarten through higher education students in public, private and

BIA schools. TEDNA is the only organization that advocates for increasing tribal sovereignty in education by improving federal laws governing Indian education.

ILTF is a community foundation that works with Indian Nations to help them regain and effectively manage their land base. Because education is a critical component of this mission ILTF has developed a unique land-based curriculum for public and private schools. The ILTF Curriculum is based on universal themes of land-based learning, and the importance of land to Indian Nations.

TEDNA has enlisted the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) and Reinhardt & Associates to provide administrative, logistical, research and development support for the project. Amy Bowers will act as the primary contact at NARF, and Dr. Martin Reinhardt will be responsible for research and development. Dr. Reinhardt is “hopeful that this project will provide educators with some good tools for teaching both tribal and non-tribal youth about how we should be treating each other and the world around us.”

The ILTF Curriculum and the professional development materials will be highlighted at TEDNA’s upcoming Tribal Education Department’s Forum to be held in Reno, Nevada June 1, 2008 in conjunction with the National Congress of American Indians’ mid-year meeting. For more information, please see www.tenda.org or contact info@tenda.org.