

March 14, 2007

Dear Tribal Council and Community Members:

The National Indian Justice Center was recently awarded a grant from the Administration for Native Americans to implement *the Songs of Our People* project. *Songs of Our People* is the literal translation of the word for “language” in Eastern Pomo.

The goal of the project is to sustain intergenerational learning and oral literacy for California Indian youth and families while creating innovative instructional resources on California Indian histories, cultures and contemporary issues for tribal and institutional educators.

The project will be implemented over the course of a 24-month time frame. It will produce and disseminate 30 or more ten to twenty minute multi-media presentations on California Indian histories. The presentations will consist of film and documents, contemporary photos, community-based interviews and other materials.

The first phase of the project involves the development and documentation of a story gathering process for California Indians using media technology. NIJC will hold 10 multi-media intergenerational two-day story gathering workshops, targeting youth 12-17 years of age to develop skills in thematic development, storyboarding, interviewing, historical research, media equipment operation and editing.

When completed, the presentations will be used to develop and disseminate a *Songs of Our People Tool Kit* containing a user’s guide to assist teachers, cultural leaders, institutions and others to use the presentations and access additional information on the themes they explore for educational purposes.

The goals of the *Songs of Our People* project is to create and provide local resources that promote the teaching of California Indian history and culture from a native perspective and the learning of our oral histories within the California public education system. The project seeks to:

- Uphold the value of intergenerational learning and oral literacy for California Indians and everyone;
- Provide points of enculturation for Native students and instructional resources on California Indian histories and cultures;
- Engender respect and awareness of California tribal cultures among teachers and other students to foster a supportive, inclusive classroom environment for California Native students

Under the project, California Indians will create innovative, media instructional resources to integrate into historical and cultural materials located in tribal archives, tribal websites, libraries, classrooms, and the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center multi media collections and exhibits.

Each of the ten participating communities will select a theme for their media project. The themes can reflect a variety of topics that are of primary importance to the community.

Potential themes could include:

- Youth interviewing Tribal Council members about Tribal Sovereignty issues and Tribal Government responsibilities.
- Tribal members interviewing other tribal members about oral histories with youth engineering the audio documentation and filming.
- Organizing and documenting community storyteller events/artistic performances.
- Documentation of historic events.
- Respected community members helping youth conduct one-on-one in home interviews with tribal elders.
- Youth capturing language and/or cultural preservation activities

Upon completion of the media trainings and presentations, NIJC will work with tribal liaisons to deposit project resources within the participating communities. The project resources will assist tribal community members and staff in housing information and working on subsequent documentation projects with community youth.

If you are interested in becoming a tribal host for this project please review and complete the application materials and resource survey attached and return it to: Raquelle Myers, Staff Attorney, National Indian Justice Center, 5250 Aero Drive, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403, (707) 579-5507, (707) 579-9019, [nijc@aol.com](mailto:nijc@aol.com) and [www.nijc.org](http://www.nijc.org).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or would like additional information about the project. We look forward to working with you to increase the skills of our youth and to expand the public's knowledge and awareness of our histories and cultures.

Sincerely,

Raquelle Myers  
Project Director

## **Songs of Our People Project**

### **Tribal Host Application**

*The Songs of Our People project responds to a community identified need to create and provide tribal resources that sustain intergenerational learning and oral literacy for California Indian youth and families while creating innovative instructional resources on California Indian histories, cultures and contemporary issues from a native perspective. Any tribe interested in this serving as a host site to the project, should submit the following information to the National Indian Justice Center:*

1. A letter from the tribal leadership acknowledging their awareness of the project and intent to serve as a tribal host site.
2. Identification of at least three youth who might be willing to participate in the two-day media training workshop and form a tribal youth media team to conduct research, thematic development, filming and editing with project staff. Please provide contact information for their parents/guardians as well as name and ages of the youth participants.
3. Identification of 1-2 adult community members and/or staff who will serve as tribal liaisons and work with project staff and youth to set up workshops, facilitate community outreach and participation, and conduct follow up activities. Please provide their contact information.
4. Suggested/potential themes that are currently of importance to the community (i.e. tribal histories, language and cultural preservation issues, contemporary issues, etc.).
5. Completed Resource Survey (attached)

## Tribal Youth and Technology Resources Survey

*The following questions will assist NIJC in assessing the youth, technological and media resources of potential tribal host sites. Your answers are appreciated and will provide NIJC with information to best serve your community in terms of preparing the educational, technological and media resources appropriate for your community. A lack of resources will not jeopardize your chance to become a host site.*

Name of Tribe: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Tribal Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an active tribal youth group? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, how often and where does your youth group meet? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name/contact information for existing youth program staff: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have your tribal youth participated in media trainings before? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do your tribal youth have regular access to computer equipment provided by the tribe? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, Windows / IBM or Apple / MAC

If yes, what type of internet connection is available to them? DSL \_\_\_ Dial Up \_\_\_  
Cable \_\_\_ T1 \_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what type of software is available (please check all that apply)?

\_\_\_ Windows version: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Microsoft Office version: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Photoshop version: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Illustrator version: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Video Editing version: \_\_\_\_\_

What Multi-media equipment is available (please indicate Yes or No)

Web cams Yes or No

Still cameras Yes or No Digital Yes or No

Video cameras Yes or No Digital Yes or No

Microphones Yes or No

Any other multi-media equipment (i.e., digital mixers); please list:

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