



“DAYBREAK STAR COLLEGE”

A proposal for a youth recovery and education program offering high school completion and two years of Community College, and focused on the Native American Community of the Greater Seattle area

Concept Paper For Potential Partners

**Presented by:
The United Indians of All Tribes
Foundation**

**Contact:
Phil Lane Jr., CEO
United Indians of All Tribes
Foundation
Telephone (206) 285-4425 ext.**

Email plane@unitedindians.com

Or

**James Kee, Development Officer
United Indians of All Tribes
Foundation
Telephone (206) 285-4425
Email jkee@uiatf.org**

**Adopted Unanimously By the
United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
Board of Directors
December 10, 2005**

Introduction

Many Native American young people in American cities have become lost to themselves, their families and their community as they virtually disappear behind the curtain of addictions, crime, unemployment, dependency and personal aimlessness. In part, this alienation process occurred as a result of fundamental conditions that exist within Indigenous communities, but also in large part, it has occurred because the primary institutions of society serving young people (such as the public school system) have been unable to reach them where they are. In other words, models, strategies and processes of learning utilized by the mainstream school system have not worked for many Native American children and youth.

As a result, levels of school failure, school dropouts and even basic literacy and numeracy among a staggeringly high proportion of Native American young people are at dangerous levels.

In this concept paper, the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation describes a proposed Native American (and disenfranchised) youth recovery and education program that will:

1. Connect with Native American and other disenfranchised young people where they are, and engage them in a learning journey toward the realization of their true potential as human beings;
2. Provide a wide range of personal development and educational opportunities tailored to the individual needs of learners, and geared toward the development of healthy human relationships as well as effective participation in family, community and workplace life;
3. Be rooted in the cultural and community realities of Native American communities, taking full advantage of the rich tapestry of cultural resources and strengths that can be brought to bear on self-development and educational processes;
4. Be oriented to producing effective and valuable citizens who are fully engaged in the life of their own families and community, and oriented to a life of service to others;
5. Prepare learners for effective participation in the world of work and for entry into specific career paths; and
6. Offer accredited educational instruction for high school completion or its equivalent and two years of community college with laddered credits to university level.

The Concept in a Nut Shell

We propose to establish a **college of life long learning** (herein referred to as “Daybreak Star College”) that will offer fully accredited high school completion and a two year college course of study, supported by a comprehensive culturally based program. That program will engage learners in a journey of self-realization and discovery related to recovering from past trauma and dysfunctional patterns of thinking and choice making, learning life skills, strengthening human relations capabilities, preparation for effective citizenship within both the Native American community and the wider society, and preparation for the world of work.

The essential elements of our plan are as follows:

1. A Hub and Spoke Model of Program Delivery

Instead of establishing a single campus to which all learners must come every day, we plan to establish a number of satellite **neighborhood learning centers** (i.e. classrooms) of 15 to 25 students (probably 5 to 8 learning centers to begin with) across the greater Seattle area. Each **neighborhood learning center** would have a teacher, video and computer linkage to our main campus at the Day Break Star Center in Discovery Park, and enough classroom resources to support both individualized instruction for each learner and group learning activities.

Why Do This?

- a. Access is a huge issue for urban Native American people (as for other minorities and disenfranchised communities). We want to bring our educational program to the neighborhoods where people are living, and link parts of the learning program to family and community life.
- b. Outreach to families and community is much more easily facilitated through this approach.
- c. The cost of daily bussing or private transportation from scattered neighborhoods in the greater Seattle area to a hub campus is too great for many Native American people to bear and would add an unsustainable cost burden to the program.
- d. The intimacy of small human scale pure learning environments that are facilitated to be supportive of its learning community has strong pedagogical advantages that we are convinced will contribute significantly to student success.

2. A Main Campus and Hub at the Day Break Star Indian Cultural Center in Seattle

The hub of our model will be located at the Day Break Star Indian Cultural Center in Discovery Park, Seattle. Daybreak Star College will be staffed with a small core team of curriculum and instruction, personal growth and life skills, community engagement and cultural specialists and equipped with computer and digital broadcast capacity that will make it possible to broadcast instructional programs from the hub with two-way participation and engagement of all of the neighborhood learning centers. As well, some portions of the program will be delivered in large workshop format that brings together the entire neighborhood learning centers into an integrated learning community at the Day Break Star Center.

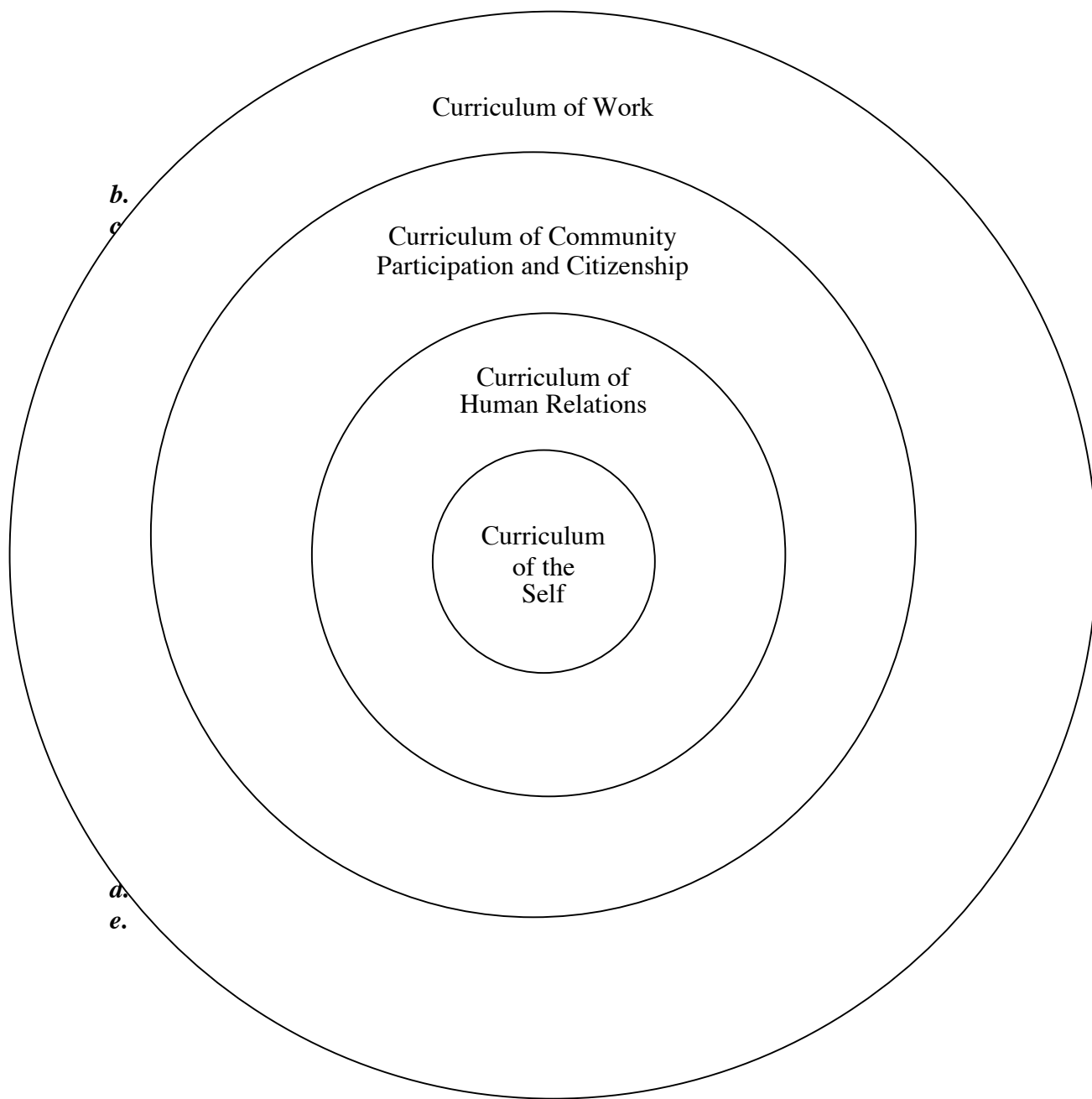
3. Comprehensive and Holistic Curriculum Framework

Given the realities and needs of the Native American community, the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation will develop and implement all Daybreak Star College courses and activities within a comprehensive, holistic curriculum framework.

a. Curriculum Content Framework

The basic content components of the framework are as follows:

- (1) ***The Curriculum of the Self*** - focuses on learning how to learn, personal growth and healing, developing emotional competency, acquiring positive qualities and virtues (such as courage, integrity, humility and compassion), and cultural/spiritual disciplines and techniques for self-development, and aligning personal capacity with life goals and professional objectives. Another central goal of the curriculum of the self is establishing the learning foundation needed for the other curriculums. This may entail developing the capacity of some learners in basic literacy and building a general academic foundation to compliment existing life-based knowledge and experience.
- (2) ***The Curriculum of Human Relations*** - focuses on developing attitudes, values and skills for constructive relationships at every level of pluralistic multicultural human society, including family life, the workplace, community participation, citizenship and professional engagement. This curriculum stream will also address the human relations dimensions of citizenship and include such areas as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution, leadership, governance and management.
- (3) ***The Curriculum of Community Participating and Citizenship*** - focuses on preparing learners for active participation in the life of their own community, and in society at large. This curriculum stream focuses on the values, knowledge and skill development needed to be able to participate as active and valuable community members in the ongoing work of solving critical issues and problems and building for sustainable human well being and prosperity.
- (4) ***The Curriculum of Work*** - focuses on the development of personal attitudes and values, habits, knowledge and skills needed for success in the 21st Century workplace, as well as job related knowledge and skills needed for specific career paths.



b. Curriculum Process Framework

The content framework (just preceding) addresses the question “*What* is to be learned?” The process framework answers the question: “*How* is learning to take place?” We are concerned that unless this question is adequately addressed our content objectives cannot be met.

We believe that for our learning intervention in the lives of young people to make the difference we are seeking, the following principles and program features must be adequately addressed related to curriculum process:

- (1) *Life-based*, i.e. the primary “classroom” must be real-life learning situations and projects ongoing within families, organizations, communities, nations and regions; and
- (2) *Learner-centered, learner-driven*, which means to us that the educational process must be built on what learners already know and what they bring to the learning context, and also that learners need to have ultimate control of their own learning process. We also recognize, of course, that at times, learners need guidance and help as they make their learning journey. The challenge we face is to offer this assistance in ways that allow the learners to remain “in the driver’s seat” of their own learning.

The traditional ways schools and colleges organize their programs, usually consisting of specialized programs, courses, classroom meetings, laboratory exercises, as well as scholastic reading, research and writing does have its utility, in that important knowledge and skills are learned through the process. But hard-won experience in many applied settings has demonstrated that even the best graduates of most traditional programs often lack many of the personal characteristics needed for success in any field (such as being a good listener), and also lack a practical grasp of how to apply what they have learned in school to real-world situations and problems.

Daybreak Star College will expand traditional methodologies (such as lectures, readings, research and writing projects, taking tests, etc.) to include a much broader range of experience. This is accomplished through the following curricular elements that are constant across the entire curriculum: *transformative action, immersion in real-life processes, and formal programs of learning and systematic self-reflection.*

1. Transformative action

An important goal of our program initiative is not merely to learn about and to reflect upon the world, but also to prepare them to contribute to its improvement (i.e. to assist those we work with to take constructive action in their own communities toward sustainable human well-being and prosperity, starting with their own self-development). The College will therefore undertake selected projects and programs (in partnership with other appropriate agencies) focused on service to others and community development.

2. Learner Immersion in Real-life Community and Workplace Setting and Processes

The College will select a range of opportunities for learners to immerse themselves in, through which they can immediately experience the need for knowledge and skill development, and can as well translate what they are learning in other parts of the program into practical applications. As well, this immersion will assist significantly in socialization for work and community life.

3. Immersion in Wilderness-based and Cultural Experiences

Reconnection to the earth (i.e. nature) and to the values and processes as well as rich resources of area Indigenous cultures will be used to assist learners to rediscover their innermost potentiality, and to strengthen their identity and their capacity for effective human

relations.

4. **Programs, Courses and Other Initiatives** that address real-world learning needs, linked to the practical ongoing work within immersion contexts, and as much as possible actually serving to positively contribute to the work underway. For example, students may be assigned the tasks of assisting in a community survey or helping to refurbish a local youth center.
5. **Systematic Self-reflection**

Through ongoing journaling, learning circles and personal growth workshops (as well as other methods), learners will be assisted to reflect on themselves as agents of change in the world, and to work towards strengthening their own personal effectiveness within the living processes in which they are engaged.

How Does All this Relate to Main-Stream School Curriculum?

Mainstream language arts, sciences, maths, and social studies curriculum objectives will be met or surpassed through a combination of individualized instruction, classroom programs and the orientation of learning objectives to particular contexts, such as workplace or community projects.

Since our approach is learning driven, the outcome objectives for all students will not be exactly the same, but the overall goal for every student will be to successfully complete two years of a college program.

What Kind of College Program?

We initially envision the following offerings at the college level:

1. A two year certificate program in Native American community development leadership;
2. A general university preparation stream;
3. Trades-oriented courses and apprenticeships, initially in carpentry and related building trades;
4. Early childhood education classroom aid certificate program (rooted in our very large and successful Head Start program).

Community Engagement and Program Governance

We recognize that if our program is going to meet the needs of the Native American (and other) communities we intend to serve, it is critical that those communities be engaged in all phases of program needs identification, design, implementation and governance.

The United Indians of All Tribes Foundation will pursue partnerships and funding sources that will support sustained community consultation and development processes over the next 3 – 5 years. We propose to marry that process with the development of Daybreak Star College.

Summary

The diagram below depicts the proposed program elements of United Indians of All Tribes Foundation Daybreak Star College.

