WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:
COEUR D’ALENE TRIBE

Coeur d’Alene Tribal members Tina Jordan, Debbie Louie-McGee, Laura Stensgar, and Rhonda Lozon receive their degrees from the University of Idaho, May 2014. (Photo: Jennifer Fletcher. Courtesy of Council Fires)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A growing number of tribal nations are designing innovative approaches to cultivate the abilities of their citizens to successfully pursue careers that will empower those nations to create the futures they seek. NCAI’s Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) has embarked on a project that works collaboratively with selected tribal nations to document their innovative approaches and share them with Indian Country.

The following presents the story of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe in Idaho, the third of four “Innovation Spotlight” case studies that PTG developed as part of this project. The four case studies were followed by a workforce development toolkit for tribal leaders and key decision-makers, which was released in 2018. The toolkit explores common challenges and emerging trends in tribal workforce development, and also presents lessons learned, policy recommendations, and questions to consider for tribal leaders and workforce development practitioners.
Introduction

“When it comes to making a difference in someone’s life, we believe there is no bigger impact than an education.”

– Chairman Chief Allan, Coeur d’Alene Tribe

The Aboriginal territory of the Indigenous people who call themselves Schitsu’umsh – meaning “Those who were found here” or “The discovered people” – covers more than five million acres of what is known today as eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and western Montana (see Figure 1). Claiming a long, proud history of seizing on newfound economic opportunities, the Schitsu’umsh gained the name Coeur d’Alene (“heart of the awl”) from the first French trappers and traders who encountered the tribe and marveled at its extensive system of trading networks in the late 1700s. In the century that followed, encroaching settlement by non-Indians limited the tribe’s mobility and eroded its robust economy, culminating in the U.S. government’s establishment in the late 1800s of the Coeur d’Alene Reservation in Idaho, which contained but a tiny sliver of the tribe’s ancestral homeland.

Today, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe (CDA) consists of approximately 2,400 enrolled members, about half of whom live on the Coeur d’Alene Reservation. Like other tribes hit hard by the federal government’s allotment policy and the loss of land that it triggered, Coeur d’Alene is a minority on its own reservation, with non-Indians comprising 80 percent of reservation residents. Allotment’s enduring effects are evident in the reservation’s complex land ownership pattern, with most of the land privately owned by individuals, some of whom are tribal members but many of whom aren’t. CDA, meanwhile, controls less than 43,000 acres in trust, a small fraction of the reservation’s 345,000 total acres. Because of this checkerboarding, CDA shares jurisdiction of the reservation with the State of Idaho, two county governments, three incorporated municipalities, and a host of federal agencies. This complicated governance picture has fueled conflicts between the reservation’s Indian and non-Indian residents, and compelled the Tribe to forge innovative approaches to its relationships with the reservation’s other jurisdictional stakeholders.

Tackling this challenge is the Coeur d’Alene Tribal government. Organized in 1947 under a constitution approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the government is led by a Tribal Council consisting of seven members elected by CDA’s membership to three-year, staggered terms of office. Immediately after each year’s election, the Council selects from its own number the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary-Treasurer to serve one-year terms as the Tribe’s officers. The Council meets weekly to handle the Tribe’s legislative affairs; meanwhile, the Tribe’s Administrative Director oversees its day-to-day operations.

The Coeur d’Alene Tribal government and those chosen to lead it are charged with helping the Tribe achieve its overarching vision, namely that: “All people on the Coeur d’Alene Indian Reservation shall have a chance to pursue their hopes and dreams as members, guardians, and stewards in a safe and healthy community.” To turn that vision into a reality, the Tribe has committed itself to delivering quality, comprehensive, coordinated programs and services designed to reduce crime and promote the health and wellness of community members.
Equally critical to this effort is the Tribe’s work to rebuild its once flourishing economy and create opportunity for its members. CDA has made considerable headway on this front over the past several decades, beginning with the Tribe’s establishment of its Farm Enterprise back in 1970, a productive operation that currently harvests 6,000 acres of wheat, peas, lentils, rapeseed, and bluegrass. Meanwhile, in 1990, the Tribe entered into a joint venture with the City of Plummer (located within the reservation’s boundaries) to create the award-winning Benewah Medical Wellness Center (BMWC). This groundbreaking partnership not only has vastly improved the quality, accessibility, and affordability of healthcare for reservation residents, it also provides them a significant number of job opportunities. Not long thereafter, CDA launched its profitable Coeur d’Alene Casino Resort Hotel, deepening the pool of available job opportunities and generating much-needed revenue the Tribe could use to address its most pressing priorities. The Tribe’s business portfolio also features Benewah Market and Benewah Automotive.
Today, the Tribe is a regional “economic powerhouse,” contributing $330 million annually in economic impact to the state’s economy and creating more than 4,360 jobs through CDA government and CDA-owned enterprises.\textsuperscript{14} The not-so-distant “days of 80% unemployment” are a thing of the past, with local employers like BMWC and the Casino Resort Hotel helping to drive down the reservation unemployment rate to as low as 10% according to one recent estimate.\textsuperscript{15}

While by all accounts the Tribe has come a long way, much work remains regarding CDA’s effort to build a sustainable reservation economy over the long run.\textsuperscript{16} Equally daunting is CDA’s challenge of preparing its people to lead and contribute to that endeavor. The tribal government, for example, features an aging workforce rife with long-tenured employees, which makes prime job openings hard to come by for tribal members seeking to build careers working for the Tribe.\textsuperscript{17} And while low-skilled jobs are locally plentiful – at the Casino Resort Hotel, for instance – CDA’s government departments and tribally-owned businesses regularly report difficulty finding Coeur d’Alene Tribal members to fill high-paying, senior management positions because they do not possess the requisite knowledge, experience, and skills.\textsuperscript{18}

Meanwhile, recent tribal demographic data shows a strikingly low percentage of 25-39 year olds living on the reservation as compared to other age groups, reflecting the fact that working-age tribal members tend to live and work elsewhere during some of their most productive career years.\textsuperscript{19} In addition, the Tribe has identified that a significant percentage of its population is not actively seeking employment.\textsuperscript{20} Last but not least, CDA struggles with some of the same issues that other tribal nations do when it comes to developing its workforce: high substance abuse rates, low high school graduation rates, deep poverty and related social ills, a subpar local public education system, and young people who “are disconnected from family and community.”\textsuperscript{21}

These various but related challenges are evoked in the goals and objectives the Tribe outlined in its 2015 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), including the need to:

- “encourage the people who grow up on the Reservation to continue to live here”;
- “incentivize young people to move back, or stay on the Reservation post high school or college”;
- “expand the number of jobs available to the local workforce”;
- “increase awareness of career importance and the proper approach for pursuing career employment”; and
- “motivate able bodied residents to search for proper employment based on skill level and to begin a career.”\textsuperscript{22}

Leading CDA’s workforce development approach is the Tribe’s Department of Education (DOE), whose programs include: Early Childhood Development (Child Care, Early Head Start, Head Start); Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Youth programs; Adult Education (GED, Employment Assistance); Higher Education (College Scholarships); and Professional Technical (Certificates, Adult Education, College Scholarships).\textsuperscript{23} DOE and its component programs work to address the Tribe’s growing workforce development needs using limited resources. For example, its WIOA operation is quite small, receiving only $10,000 per year to support adult tribal...
members. Meanwhile, other entities like CDA’s Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO), its Casino Resort Hotel, and the Tribe’s human resource directors serve complementary roles in the overall effort.

Creating a Pipeline to the Future

CDA leaders and members have long prioritized education as a “game changer” for the Tribe’s ability to create the vibrant future it envisions for its younger and future generations. But in the mid-2000s, key tribal decision-makers began to recognize that their existing approach wasn’t making the grade. As one indication, the high school graduation rate of the Plummer-Worley Joint School District, located on the reservation, was languishing at just 34 percent.

In response, in 2006 tribal members convened several public meetings to discuss how the Tribe could strengthen the capacity of its people to reduce poverty and improve the overall quality of reservation life. From these conversations came a formal initiative called Horizons, which featured a series of community visioning sessions (which produced a community economic vision statement); formal trainings of elected and grassroots leaders on leadership skills and community development; and the formation of a community-based steering committee to tackle poverty through a comprehensive approach addressing social, emotional, intellectual, and cultural considerations as well as economic ones.

With the Tribe at the helm and its partners University of Idaho Extension and Northwest Area Foundation providing critical support, the 18-month Horizons program provided CDA a mechanism through which it could strategically address a tough obstacle: the educational achievement gap. Meanwhile, in the midst of the Tribe’s work with Horizons, Administrative Director Robert Matt requested that CDA’s new DOE Director, Chris Meyer, provide him a one-page response to the simple question: “What does the Department of Education do?” DOE did plenty, but Dr. Meyer and her staff took the request as an instruction to define an overarching, strategic vision for DOE’s multifaceted work. DOE’s answer to Matt’s question, together with the foundation laid by the Horizons initiative, served as the springboard for its crafting of CDA’s new approach to education and workforce development, embodied in what the Tribe calls its “Education Pipeline.”

Developed in 2007 and continually refined ever since, the Pipeline was spurred by the Tribe’s acknowledgment of two fundamental facts: first, that in order to develop the workforce it needs to create the future it wants, CDA would have to become a primary decision maker in the various education systems that were educating its people; and second, that building this capable workforce demanded that it start at the beginning and focus on the root causes of what was standing in the way of its people’s success.

Taking visual form (see Figure 2), the Pipeline presents a comprehensive illustration of the Tribe’s existing state of affairs regarding education and workforce development. It features 15 chronologically sequenced, educational groupings: Early Child, Primary (K-2), and so on, up
Figure 2: Coeur d’Alene Tribe Education Pipeline, Spring 2016 (Courtesy of Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education)

Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education Pipeline Spring 2016

Early Head Start
- Male: 20
- Female: 20
- Total: 40
- CDA: 33

Head Start
- Male: 22
- Female: 21
- Total: 43
- CDA: 40

Aftercare
- Male: 13
- Female: 9
- Total: 22
- CDA: 20

ITF
- Male: 6
- Female: 4
- Total: 10
- CDA: 7

Early Childhood
- Female: 20
- Total: 30
- CDA: 6

Primary
- K-2
- Female: 20
- Total: 30
- CDA: 6

Elementary
- 3-6
- Female: 12
- Total: 22
- CDA: 7

Middle
- 7-8
- Male: 10
- Female: 12
- Total: 20
- CDA: 8

Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

High School Graduation Year
- Male: 40
- Female: 31
- Total: 71
- CDA: 20

GED Adult
- Male: 20
- Female: 11
- Total: 31
- CDA: 28

GED Youth
- Male: 6
- Female: 3
- Total: 9

Post Secondary
- NACTEP/AVT
- Male: 18
- Female: 11
- Total: 29
- CDA: 35

Post Secondary HED AA/AS
- Male: 14
- Female: 11
- Total: 25
- CDA: 22

Post Secondary HED BA/BS
- Male: 2
- Female: 1
- Total: 3
- CDA: 2

Graduate Degree
- Master’s
- Male: 2
- Female: 0
- Total: 2
- CDA: 2

Professional Degree
- Male: 0
- Female: 3
- Total: 3
- CDA: 0

Programs:
- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- Child Care Program
- Imagine The Future
- First Steps
- K1 Kids (K-1)
- Success Center After School Program (Gr. 2-5)
- U of Idaho 4-H Extension (Gr. 2-5)
- BPA Grant
- U of I NSF Grant BTIE (Gr. 4-6)
- WSU Leadership Camp
- Natural Resources Camp
- Johnson O’Malley Program
- NACTEP Summer Internship
- Johnson O’Malley Program
- Imagine the Future
- GEAR UP
- Dual Credit Program
- College Program
- Credit Retrieval Program
- Upward Bound
- Native American Career and Technical Education Program:
  - Summer Youth Internship
  - Summer Youth College Classes
- Career Awareness Program
- Pre-Employment Program
- Natural Resource Camp
- WSU Leadership Camp
- College Preparation Program
- College Campus Visits
- Success Program:
  - Tutoring Program
  - Advising Program
- Workforce Investment Act (Youth)
- Community Partners:
  - UI Extension
  - BMC Wellness Center
  - Rockin’ the Res Program
  - Hopiesshet (it is our well-being) Program
- Adult Education
- Pre-College Program:
  - Pre-college Reading/Writing
  - Precollege Math
  - Math 108
  - Keyboarding
  - Native American Career and Technical Education Scholarship Program:
    - Adult Apprenticeships
    - Business Leadership AAS Degree
    - Hospitality AAS Degree
  - Partnerships:
    - ELCI
    - North Idaho College
    - Idaho Dept. of Labor
    - U of I Moscow
    - U of I CDA
    - Lewis Clark State College
    - WSU Pullman
    - WSU Spokane (Health Sciences)
- Adult Vocational Training Program (AVT)
- Native American Career and Technical Education Scholarship Program
- Workforce Investment Act (Adult)
- Tribal Scholarship Program
- HED Program College Partnerships:
  - Community Colleges of Spokane
  - Gonzaga
  - LCSC Lewiston/LCSC Coeur d’Alene
  - North Idaho College
  - UI of Coeur d’Alene
  - U of I Moscow
  - WSU Pullman
  - WSU Spokane (Health Sciences)
- Intercollage MOU’s
- North Idaho College
- NW Indian College
- University of Idaho
- Lewis Clark State College
- Washington State University

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through high school and GED programs, various post-secondary tracks, graduate degrees, and professional degrees. Ideally, individuals enter the Pipeline when they are infants, remain in the Pipeline with the Tribe’s support as they move from one educational stage to the next, and emerge at the end of Pipeline as prepared, productive members of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and community. The number of students in each grouping is tracked above the Pipeline visual. For K-12, this includes non-Native students, who make up about half of the population of Plummer-Worley’s schools. These numbers track how many students are moving through the Pipeline at any given point. Meanwhile, below the Pipeline visual is an inventory of the programs; support mechanisms; and local, regional, and federal partners currently working within each segment of the Pipeline. This inventory not only features the Tribe’s Early Childhood Learning Center, local schools, and DOE’s higher education programs, but also “family services, out-of-school-time programs, sports, tutoring, career programs, and college preparation programs.”

The Pipeline’s Key Functions

Simply put, the Pipeline frames and drives everything DOE does. It empowers DOE to achieve its mission, which is to “implement the Tribe’s commitment to education which includes the enhancement of the social, moral, and economic well-being of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe and its membership.” It has effectively become CDA’s Swiss Army knife for nation building through education and workforce development, evidenced by the many critical functions it serves for the Tribe, among them:

Function #1: Identifies Gaps, Weaknesses, and Overlaps

From the start, the Pipeline proved to be an effective tool for illuminating gaps in the services that CDA and others were providing to those who were moving through it. It also revealed which services were not meeting the Tribe’s emerging standards for holistic, culturally appropriate programming. “The Pipeline creates a longitudinal, linear view of what is currently being done in education from birth through career, and this longitudinal view helps to identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and resources,” says Shawna Daniels, Program Manager for DOE’s State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) Program. “Ongoing development and analysis of the Pipeline helps DOE to identify policies, programs, grants, and resources needed to support tribal members’ successful growth along the Pipeline.”

DOE staff focused like a laser on the standard educational transition points along the Pipeline as a way of isolating and addressing trouble spots. For example, they observed issues with CDA youth as they transitioned out of early childhood programs, which the Pipeline demonstrated was due in part to them no longer receiving certain types of support services once they reached kindergarten. Staff discovered a similar drop-off between the second and third grades, when many kids began struggling academically. They also discerned that if CDA students were to succeed in both college and careers, they needed to preemptively tackle the emerging challenges those students were encountering before they entered high school.
Function #2: Addresses Critical New Questions

The Pipeline gave CDA the ability to answer a simple question: Why? Why were ruptures in the Pipeline occurring? Why were CDA students disengaging and abandoning their educational journeys?³³

For example, upon establishing the Pipeline, DOE staff conducted a comprehensive analysis of CDA’s high school dropout problem to understand its true severity and root causes. The State of Idaho’s local school districts had lowballed the dropout rate of CDA students at just four percent, but their calculation was based on the percentage of those students who started senior year but then didn’t graduate. DOE’s own tabulations, meanwhile, showed classes starting the ninth grade with around four dozen CDA students on average. However, four years later, those classes were only yielding about one dozen high school graduates, meaning three quarters of the students had left school.⁴⁰ DOE then engaged in a case-by-case assessment of those students to determine why they had dropped out. It found that a preponderance of its ninth- and tenth-grade students were repeating those grades, and that not one of those students went on to graduate. It led DOE staff to conclude that CDA students were not adequately prepared to succeed in high school from the start. As Laura Laumatia, Environmental Specialist for CDA’s Lake Management Department and former University of Idaho Extension Coordinator, explains, “The Pipeline provides this tracking of what’s happening in education at each chronological age. For us to be able to lay that out and say, ‘There’s an age group that we are not even doing any outreach for and yet that’s the one where we’re seeing kids disengaging,’ it helped us.”⁴¹

Function #3: Provides a Strategic Decision-Making Lens

The Pipeline provides CDA with a broad, strategic lens for decision making as it figures out how best to support its people’s growth over the course of their lives.⁴² This lens observes everything the Tribe has deemed as critical to its efforts to develop its human capacity on its own terms and towards its own ends. It focuses on not only what its people are learning, but how they are learning, the environments in which they learn, and the roles that peers, families, and community can and should play in the learning process.⁴³ “It’s really powerful for all of us involved,” explains Elva “Cookie” Allan, CDA’s comprehensive planning consultant. “It helps us to see on one page the scope of services involved to help a person succeed, what we see as success on the reservation.”⁴⁴

“The Pipeline was the visual that we needed to look and say, ‘Hey, here’s the big picture, and where do we need to go?’”

– Tina Jordan, Director of Human Resources, Coeur d’Alene Tribe

This is especially true of the way DOE now pursues funding for education and workforce development. Whereas before the Tribe may have chased dollars to satisfy short-term considerations like adding government jobs or shoring up current fiscal year programmatic budgets, now it targets
specific funding opportunities designed to address long-term priorities that flow from DOE’s assessment of what Pipeline areas need strengthening. Doing so helps to keep DOE and the tribal government as a whole squarely focused on DOE’s mission. According to Daniels, “The Pipeline guides all of the work, and identifies from the actual Tribe what we’re needing and where we want to go. So grants are not even sought unless it fits into the needs of our Pipeline.” The Pipeline also enables DOE to engage in long-term forecasting to ensure sustainability through comparing the funding streams of its programs with its numerical projections of CDA members who are set to enter each stage of the Pipeline.

**Function #4: Facilitates Targeting of Programs and Services**

The Pipeline enables DOE to hone in on the trouble spots and devise targeted solutions to address them. Sometimes, this involves revamping existing programs and services to make them more effective. Other times, it means planning, funding, and implementing new initiatives from scratch. In addition, DOE uses the Pipeline as a tool to gauge when a CDA student or group of students begins to falter and swiftly respond with the customized support, guidance, and resources they need to get back on track and stay in the Pipeline. According to Norma Peone, Higher Education/Tribal Institute Manager, “Before, by the time students would get to me, they were already behind the eight ball. Now, we’re much more proactive.” Likewise, if CDA members aren’t currently in the Pipeline, DOE can deploy measures to isolate and address the reasons why and then support them to return to school or enter the workforce.

Two programs exemplify how the Pipeline facilitates this adaptive process. First, in an effort to address the preparedness issues it was observing with CDA youth who were transitioning out of the Tribe’s Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC), DOE developed and obtained funding for Imagine the Future (ITF), a new pre-K initiative (see Figure 3). ITF, which seeks to prepare ECLC students for “successful entry” into kindergarten, provides “a developmentally and culturally age-appropriate literacy, science, math, and mental health program using researched-based teaching and learning strategies to develop school readiness and resiliency skills.”

Meanwhile, having used the Pipeline to identify a shortage of after-school and summer enrichment opportunities for CDA students once they left the third grade, CDA joined forces with the nearby Spokane Tribe – with whom it shares a large watershed – to create Back to the Earth (BTTE). Available to children in grades 4-6, BTTE is a summer and after-school program grounded in culture- and place-based learning about science, technology, engi-
neering, and mathematics (STEM). BTTE not only plugs a critical Pipeline gap by giving CDA youth in that particular age group more enrichment options, it also addresses the desire of CDA’s leadership to raise interest among the Tribe’s young people in STEM careers so that they will gain the necessary “skills [and] knowledge to provide substantive input into management and remediation” of the Tribe’s lands and resources over time.

**Function #5: Maps and Measures Outcomes**

Dubbing it “the Tribe’s outcome map,” CDA integrates within the Pipeline short- and longer-term objectives that it then directs the Pipeline’s various programs and services to achieve. Once it sets those desired outcomes, it assesses the Pipeline’s current data on an ongoing basis to follow and measure its progress towards achieving those outcomes. As Laumatia explains, “DOE uses it as a ruler to determine, ‘This is where we need to get to, and this is where we are falling short.’” When a particular program or service falls short, the Tribe restructures it and/or crafts and deploys new strategies to accomplish its goals in accordance with the timetables it has set.

For example, one reason that CDA youth were experiencing difficulties when they reached kindergarten was because the ECLC was being run more like a daycare center than a learning center. Recognizing this dynamic’s impact on the academic preparedness of ECLC’s outgoing students, DOE decided to bring the ECLC under its programmatic umbrella. It then instituted a series of accountability measures to ensure that not only the learning but the health and wellness of students became the center’s sole priority. Whereas before parents dropped off their children at the center throughout the day, the ECLC now requires parents to show up in time for breakfast in the morning so their children can receive a healthy meal and start the day’s lessons together. This was not an easy transition for parents who had grown accustomed to dropping their kids off whenever they wanted. But with the right incentives, like requiring late parents to stay with their kids through the duration of breakfast and instituting a cutoff time of 10 a.m. for drop-offs, punctuality became the new norm. According to Tina Jordan, CDA’s Director of Human Resources, “This was the start to making a change. Parents got ingrained in their mind that their children have to be in attendance.”

**Function #6: Drives Communication and Coordination**

DOE learned early on that creating and maintaining an accurate picture of CDA’s education and workforce development efforts demanded that it develop processes for regular communication and coordination with all of those who play a role in sustaining the Pipeline. These include not only the constellation of external and regional partners that DOE relies on, but also all of its tribal government and local partners. In that vein, DOE created an interagency team consisting of CDA’s Social Services and Justice department staff, the Tribe’s youth activities staff, local school administrators and teachers, local clergy, and representatives of the higher education institutions with which the Tribe works. The team meets quarterly to assess the current state of the Pipeline, study the root causes of the issues they are collectively observing, and determine what changes need to be made to strengthen and grow it.
Function #7: Frames the Tribe’s Expectations

Last but not least, the Pipeline provides a clear and powerful instruction to CDA citizens about the educational journey that the Tribe expects its people to take, and the support that the Tribe will provide them as they take each step on that journey. It also raises expectations for CDA’s leadership and those charged with providing that support, demonstrating “the responsibilities inherent in assuming Tribal Sovereignty and an increased obligation for education from cradle to career.” As Dr. Meyer explains, “With the pipeline, there’s no guessing what we’re trying to accomplish.”

Assess and Respond: Strengthening the Pipeline

Three main aspects of DOE’s work epitomize how the Tribe has been working to strengthen the Pipeline over time in order to advance its education and workforce development goals:

Driving Data

While building the first iteration of the Pipeline, DOE quickly realized that if it was going to develop the Pipeline as an effective decision making and evaluation tool, it must tackle a critical shortcoming: data. Staff then engaged in a systematic assessment of DOE’s programs to determine what kinds of data they were collecting, about whom, for whom, and for what reasons. They found that across the board, the Tribe did not truly steer the data-generation processes it was relying on to inform the Pipeline. According to Daniels, “The Pipeline helped us to analyze our services from a longitudinal view and critically analyze our current data collection methods and how we were analyzing, using, and sharing that data to drive systems and services.”

For example, several DOE programs collected data about all of the people they served – not just CDA’s enrolled members. While the Tribe has long been committed to allocating its resources to better the entire reservation community, the data-collection methods these programs used did not isolate and assess CDA members specifically, which meant that DOE staff were unable to compare their health and wellbeing to that of other Natives living on the reservation. Once they generated the data necessary to make that comparison, they found that CDA members weren’t faring as well as other Native people living at Coeur d’Alene when it came to their health and wellbeing. “We found that if a majority of the people that need your services are CDA, then maybe you need to change your approach to target those folks,” says Cookie Allan. “We can’t have a healthy community if we don’t have a healthy tribe.”

CDA also encountered an issue that plagues many other tribes: much of the data it was collecting was based on someone else’s criteria and for someone else’s benefit, most notably the federal

“As impressive as the Tribe’s educational philanthropy has been, its tracking of the Tribe’s children and young is probably even more impressive. No Coeur d’Alene child falls through the cracks.”

– National Education Association Human and Civil Rights Awards Program
government. As Allan explains, “We were seeing a disconnect between what we were collecting for federal reporting requirements and what we actually needed to be looking at to effect positive outcomes for our community.” For example, DOE’s decision to overhaul the ECLC derived in part from its realization that the Learning Center was not capturing the data it needed to get an accurate read on its students’ distinct challenges and how best to address them. According to Meyer, the ECLC then embarked on a three-year process

“to become a data-driven center and for us to begin collecting data that was going to tell us what was going on health wise with our children, educationally, nutritionally, in all the content areas. So we have a pretty clear picture of what’s going on with our little ones and what we need to do. We have a pretty clear picture of what’s going on with our families also and what we need to do.”

Across its programs, DOE now occupies the driver’s seat regarding data, ensuring that it is learning what it needs to develop solutions customized to the particular needs of the Coeur d’Alene people and expressed priorities of the Tribe. According to Allan, “We now go above and beyond federal requirements to see what we need to be collecting and analyzing to see the change that we know is needed here.” DOE closely tracks the status and progress of all CDA members from pre-school through Ph.D., from where they are being schooled to the specific support programs upon which they depend. It now asks new and different questions through its data collections processes. For instance, DOE asks CDA youth on probation about what cultural activities – such as horse therapy – they would like to participate in as they work to get back on the right path. Meanwhile, seeking to get a handle on its high school dropout issue, DOE investigated local extracurricular programs such as basketball and football to determine how many youth were failing to complete those activities, leading to the creation of new accountability measures in those programs to encourage attendance and stick-to-itiveness.

**Early Exposure to College, Careers, and a Professional Environment**

The Pipeline illustrated to CDA the need to start sooner if it was serious about preparing its young people for college and career. In response, in 2008 DOE launched a rigorous, six-week summer internship program for CDA youth. The paid internships – which DOE designs in consultation with their host locations – are structured to mimic the demands and expectations of a professional workplace. Students ages 14-18 apply through a highly competitive process that requires formal interviews and the submission of resumés. Applicants who do not meet the program’s standards for professionalism – dress, punctuality, fully answering all of the application questions, etc. – do not get chosen.

Those who do are then placed with the ECLC, BMWC, Benewah Market, DOE, and CDA’s Natural Resources, Forestry, Finance, and Human Resources departments, among others. DOE also has designed internships with CDA’s Lake Management Department, in which CDA youth conduct metals analysis on the water in Lake Coeur d’Alene and work to revitalize the water potato, a food staple and cultural icon for the Tribe. According to Meyer,

“It is not based on who you are. It’s based upon that interview committee selecting
them for those internships, and those internships have also been designed in collaboration with that manager in terms of the skillset that we want them to learn during that six weeks and then they are evaluated. And they are drug tested just like the rest of us. So they actually have to follow the same HR policies that we do.”

For DOE staff, it’s about raising the bar for and broadening the horizons of CDA youth, showing them what’s possible and what they can and should set their minds to achieving. As Peone explains, “Those kids are not just put in a place to sweep and mop and pick up garbage. They are put into positions that really stretch their brains and get them asking, ‘Do I really want to work at Benewah Market when I graduate from high school or do I want to go on to college?’ There’s pointed reasoning behind it.”

Many students return to their internship placements summer after summer, casting an eye towards concentrating their studies and building their careers in those fields. Others, meanwhile, decide against their initial fields of interest based on their internship experiences, prompting them to shift their focus elsewhere. Gaining real-world exposure to different careers at an early age benefits not only the students but the Tribe, which preserves precious resources by having students discover their career passions before they complete Tribe-supported degree or post-secondary training programs for careers they ultimately won’t pursue.

In addition to the summer internship program, for the past eight years DOE has hosted an annual career fair for students in grades 6-12, who gather to learn from tribal enterprises and other em-
ployers about the jobs that are locally and regionally available, and what sort of education and training it will take to secure them. DOE also works with its higher education partners at University of Idaho and Washington State University to provide one-week summer camps and related summer programming for CDA’s middle school students. Meanwhile, CDA youth in grades 8-12 also can take online courses from Spokane Community College, enabling them to get a head start on obtaining a degree. Taking it one step further, in 2016 DOE designed and secured funding for a new initiative for middle school students, which it called the “most underserved” students on the Pipeline. Made possible by a U.S. Department of Education Native Youth Community Project grant, the initiative will create “a successful school, college and career readiness program” through a partnership between DOE, Coeur d’Alene Tribal School, Plummer-Worley School District, students’ families, CDA’s leadership, community members, and local colleges and universities. Among other things, the program will provide individual and small group mental health counseling to students who are experiencing the adverse effects of childhood trauma.

Using the Pipeline to set the foundation, context, and vision for collaboration, DOE has toiled over the past decade to craft partnerships with the various entities it has identified as critical to making the Pipeline function as intended. On the Tribe’s behalf, it has forged standing Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) with five area colleges and universities and a formally structured relationship with the Plummer-Worley School District, whose student population is more than 70 percent Native. With the Pipeline visual, CDA’s partners can see where they fit in – and how they contribute to – the Tribe’s effort to build a vibrant nation. According to Daniels, “It’s been used as a communications tool to strengthen partnerships with our local colleges and universities in which they helped us to design certificate and degree programs that are geared towards the workforce needs of our Tribe.”

Three examples best illustrate how CDA has embraced partnerships as its operational credo to secure its rightful place as a primary decision maker in the education and workforce development systems upon which the Tribe relies:

**Plummer-Worley School District (PWSD) Partnership:** For years, ill will and finger pointing characterized the CDA-PWSD relationship. But several years ago, Dr. Meyer and PWSD Superintendent Judi Sharrett recognized that the District stood little chance of improving student performance and graduation rates as long as the two remained at odds. So they developed a strong working relationship, which has since evolved into a strong institutional partnership between the Tribe and PWSD. Driving this collaboration is the Grant Alignment Committee, which is comprised of DOE and PWSD staff. The committee meets regularly to discuss how to align the funding it seeks with the educational objectives they hold in common as well as how to enhance PWSD’s curricula to better reflect CDA’s culture and core values. PWSD and CDA also have banded together to secure a pair of voter-supported tax levies to increase PWSD’s funding for education. In addition, DOE meets weekly with CDA members who work for PWSD to learn about and troubleshoot any emerging issues with the CDA students attending PWSD schools.

While it remains a challenge to fully “merge culture and curriculum,” by all accounts the CDA-PWSD partnership is beginning to pay dividends. As one indication, in 2014 the District reported
an overall graduation rate of 90 percent, a sea change from where the rate stood just a decade earlier.\textsuperscript{73} The District now views the Tribe’s contributions to education as essential and has adopted the Education Pipeline as its own. As Sharrett explains the District’s progress, “I do not believe this would have been possible without the assistance of our tribal neighbor.”\textsuperscript{74}

**North Idaho College (NIC) Stackable Certificates:** CDA signed its first MOA with NIC in 1997. Titled the “9 Point Agreement,” it sought to facilitate collaboration “on projects of mutual benefit to both communities, and to make NIC a more welcoming and supportive environment for Indian students.”\textsuperscript{75} This original agreement yielded measured progress on CDA’s educational priorities, but when the time came to renew it in 2009, the Tribe seized the opportunity to strengthen the agreement to ensure that NIC’s curriculum truly worked for CDA students.

The revised agreement’s goals include developing “new courses in conjunction with needs as expressed by [the] Coeur d’Alene Tribe, including a sovereignty/governance course.”\textsuperscript{76} NIC initially proposed offering additional short-term workforce trainings designed primarily for entry-level jobs, but DOE and its Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP) pushed back. From their perspective, CDA students didn’t need more short-term trainings; they needed full technical degree programs that would lead to sustainable careers. Through the agreement’s coordinating group, NIC and DOE then jointly devised an innovative solution: new two-year, Applied Science degree programs based upon “stackable certificates.” In effect, CDA students could gradually build up to an associate’s degree one certificate at a time, an approach that turned out to be desirable for NIC’s non-Native students as well. NIC launched its first “stackable certificate” degree in business leadership and, through ongoing consultation with CDA, has since established similar two-year degree offerings in restoration technology (designed to enhance CDA’s natural resource management capability) and hospitality management (in partnership with Coeur d’Alene’s Casino Resort Hotel).

To make this new education locally available, DOE and NIC teamed up to create the Flexible Learning Center, which is housed in DOE’s complex in Plummer, Idaho – more than 30 miles away from NIC’s main campus. Most CDA students pursuing these degrees take their courses at the Center using interactive videoconferencing technology installed with NIC’s assistance. And thanks to joint outreach by DOE and NIC, other area schools like the University of Idaho and Lewis-Clark State College now accept NIC’s “stackable certificate” credits and degrees toward four-year degrees at their institutions. “It’s been very successful because we’re working with a population that never thought that they could earn a degree,” says Meyer. “So being able to take one course at a time and then earning a certificate they realize, ‘Oh, my gosh, I can do this. I can earn a degree.’”\textsuperscript{77}

**Washington State University (WSU) Visionary Leaders Program:** DOE’s partnership with WSU has followed a similar path. In 1997, CDA became one of eight original signatory tribes with ancestral homelands in the State of Washington to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WSU. Among other things, the MOU established the WSU Native American Advisory Board to the President, which provides a mechanism “to strengthen the relationships between them [WSU and the signatory tribes], and to improve the quality of educational services and opportunities provided to Native American students at WSU.”\textsuperscript{78} While WSU administrators have abided by the MOU’s
letter since its inception, several years ago DOE staff decided that wasn’t enough. They weren’t seeing the culturally appropriate curriculum or the focus on developing students’ research skills that they had envisioned. Nor was WSU adequately preparing CDA students to return home to work at Coeur d’Alene.⁷⁹

In response, Dr. Meyer submitted a formal complaint to WSU on CDA’s behalf, which resulted in more frequent regular meetings of the Native American Advisory Board (it now meets twice a year), a commitment of additional scholarships for CDA and other Native students, and the creation of an additional position to serve those students. Most importantly, the meeting served as a springboard for the development of a new four-year degree called the “Visionary Leaders” Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program, launched in the fall of 2013.

Designed to achieve “essential learning outcomes” for CDA and WSU’s other participating Native students, Visionary Leaders prepares them “to make meaningful contributions to Nation Building among Native nations.”⁸⁰ According to Barbara Aston, WSU’s Director of Native American Programs and Tribal Liaison, the program was designed “one hundred percent based on what they [the MOU’s signatory tribes] were recommending, the values they expressed, and the framework they wanted it built around.”⁸¹ DOE staff views the program and the process used to create it as models it can replicate elsewhere, and the CDA’s partnership with WSU is on its strongest footing to date.

**Factors Driving Success**

The progress that the Pipeline has seeded is undeniable. It can be seen not only in improved data indicators like PWSD’s graduation rate, but also in the growing number of personal stories
of educational and career success being authored by CDA members. The Pipeline’s success is due in considerable part to the following three key factors:

“Bulldog” Advising

CDA’s crafting of its Pipeline approach flowed in part from the Tribe’s recognition that it was not doing a good enough job of understanding the particular, often complex challenges that hindered the ability of its members to succeed academically and professionally. Consequently, DOE has cultivated a multifaceted system of close, personal, targeted support for tribal members from birth through adulthood.

Designed to be both proactive and responsive, the system seeks to get to know each student on an individual basis and educate that student about the support services and resources available from the Tribe and its Pipeline partners. It not only provides DOE with a direct window into students’ struggles, but also critical insights into their innate talents and personal aspirations and how DOE can channel students into careers that employ those talents and realize those aspirations.82 It also has proved useful in raising students’ self-esteem and instilling in them the belief that they can meet the challenge of higher education. As Tina Jordan explains, “Part of the discussion we were having is as Native people, how do you start having confidence in yourself and complete something like high school and even consider college when you don’t have any either self-worth or self-identity, and when you feel like you don’t have that support?”83

While some describe this system as “intrusive” advising, Jordan calls it the “bulldog effect.”84 At its heart is DOE’s staff, who offer encouragement to CDA students every chance they get. They treat each chance encounter with a student as an opportunity to nurture – and to nudge. According to Peone, who describes herself as the “watchdog and grandma” of CDA students, “Every time Dr. Meyer sees someone she thinks ought to be in school, she asks, ‘Have you gotten your degree yet?’”85

DOE’s bulldog approach deploys several other methods designed to provide CDA students the guidance, advice, resources, and encouragement they need to resume or continue with their educations, perform well academically, and realize their professional dreams. Below are just some examples:

- DOE closely monitors the grades of CDA students and intervenes as soon as their academic performance starts to slip.
- DOE staff members regularly visit PWSD schools to provide one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to CDA students.
- The shared office of DOE’s Johnson O’Malley and Imagine the Future programs maintains an open door policy for CDA students in need of assistance.
- DOE assigns staff members to each be responsible for a high school grade, tasking them to build personal relationships with the CDA students in that grade so that they can identify and address emerging signs of academic distress. DOE staff then meets weekly to share reports on each grade.
• DOE maintains close relationships with parents through regular phone and email communication to ensure active family involvement in their children’s academic progress.
• DOE works with CDA’s departmental human resources directors to identify and encourage existing employees to pursue higher education degrees.

The proof of this system’s benefits is in the results. Jordan, for example, recently obtained associate’s and bachelor’s degrees 19 years after graduating high school because DOE staff pushed her to resume her education. She recently was accepted into the University of Idaho’s Executive MBA program. This despite the fact that, according to Jordan, she “never thought of getting a degree because I didn’t think I was smart enough to do it.”86 Others are crafting similar stories of achievement and perseverance with DOE’s help:

• Caj Matheson, who graduated from high school nearly 25 years ago, recently obtained a bachelor’s degree in Organizational Sciences at the urging of a DOE staffer who argued that “it could be your stepping stone.” Since obtaining his degree, he has been given additional, managerial duties – and a pay raise – in his capacity as Cultural Resources Protection Program Manager for CDA’s Lake Management Department. According to Matheson, who is now considering pursuing a master’s in Business Administration (MBA), “Mine definitely was not the traditional route. I realized that without a degree, it would be difficult for me to move up the ladder.”87
• Ray Miramontez, who works in customer service at the Coeur d’Alene Casino Resort Hotel, is working on an associate’s degree in Political Science with an eye towards becoming a lawyer someday.
• Shawna Daniels, who began working for the Tribe immediately after receiving her bachelor’s degree in 2000, recently obtained an Executive MBA after a decade away from school. She credits her graduate school studies with enabling her to be more innovative in her work, and she is now working on a Ph.D. in Education with a focus on Indigenous Research Methodologies at the University of Idaho.
• Ralph Allan, brother-in-law of Cookie Allan, entered the Pipeline upon his release from prison. With DOE’s support and guidance, he has since completed an associate’s degree and obtained a job as a supervisor with CDA’s Wildlife Program. According to Cookie, “He’s got purpose now.”88

Nurturing a Commitment to Civic Obligation and Service

Developing the Pipeline forced DOE to tackle two other, related challenges that have long plagued the Tribe when it comes to higher education: getting their best and brightest to return home upon obtaining their degrees, and ensuring that they have a firm grounding in Coeur d’Alene culture with a firm commitment to serving the Coeur d’Alene community once they do. As Meyer explains, “Our college graduates were not being exposed to an Indigenous-based curriculum that raised their spiritual, political, and critical consciousness. They were not being prepared to serve as tribal advocates in their home communities.”89
Consequently, DOE is working with its higher education partners to ensure that their curricula fosters CDA students’ sense of cultural identity and civic obligation – and prepares them to fulfill that obligation. For Paulette Jordan, CDA’s Enrollment Director, it boils down to getting tribal members to take ownership in the Tribe and its future: “That’s the whole reason why we push them out [into higher education], to come back and build up our community and make it better.”

A linchpin of this effort is the aforementioned Visionary Leaders Program at WSU. The program’s rigorous curriculum – which is both research and writing intensive – seeks to impart the core values that the Tribe and DOE are working to cultivate in all CDA members, in particular those pursuing higher education (see Figure 4). WSU explicitly identifies four of these values as foundational components of the Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program on the program’s website. Stewardship, for example, involves

“the care for that which has been entrusted to us, beginning with our own person, our gifts, and our needs. Pursuing higher education is one of the ways in which we are stewards of our talents and potential…Through developing stewardship of self, the individual is prepared to share and role model the value of stewardship within our Tribal community, caring for human, cultural, and natural resources for present and future quality of life of all members of the community, including the natural world.”

“The program’s budding success is rooted in its fostering of mutual accountability between the Tribe and CDA’s participating students. Not just anyone can apply to the program. To be eligible, a student must be nominated by the tribe of which they are a part. Once enrolled, students are required to develop and present in-depth profiles of their tribes. As Aston explains, “It builds in the students a sense of responsibility to their tribes, and their tribes to the students.”
But DOE isn’t stopping with higher education and those tribal members that leave home to get a college degree. At the Department’s request, the University of Idaho (UI) recently began offering a Federal Indian Law course at DOE’s headquarters in Plummer. Open to tribal members and other local residents whether they’re degree-seeking students or not, the course also teaches about tribal sovereignty, how the Tribe is exercising its sovereignty, and the role tribal members and employees play in strengthening that sovereignty. According to Peone, “It has been such an eye-opener for a multitude of people here across the reservation.”

Meanwhile, DOE’s recently launched STEP program targets PWSD schools (grades K-12) and the Coeur d’Alene Tribal School (K-8) to “strengthen the cultural identity of students to improve academic success and graduation rates.”

Building the Tribe’s Research Capacity

Recognizing the comprehensive data needs that strengthening the Pipeline will entail, DOE has prioritized building the Tribe’s research capacity. The goal is to enhance the Tribe’s ability to generate and analyze tribally relevant data to inform tribal decision making in real time, as well as develop a longitudinal system of research and analysis that will enable CDA to measure the effectiveness of Pipeline initiatives over time. “We need to grow our own researchers so that we can conduct our own research,” explains Meyer. “We can conduct research that’s important to us, that will help change some of those issues that we see on that Pipeline.”

In addition to the research training and skills that CDA students are gaining through WSU’s Visionary Leaders Program – which DOE helped to design – the Department recently assembled its first research “cohort.” Selected from those who took UI’s Federal Indian Policy course in the fall of 2015, the eight students that comprise the cohort have since taken two research methodology courses and one education course. DOE is working with UI to develop an “Indigenous Research” graduate degree program, into which it would channel that cohort and subsequent CDA research cohorts. According to Laumatia, “The capacity of the Tribe to do its own research to meet its own needs is really deepening.”

Growing Its Success

By all accounts, the Pipeline’s far-reaching benefits become more evident with each passing year. Summing up the Pipeline, Daniels explains, “It’s been a change agent within the Tribe to further strengthen our sovereignty and self-determination for individuals, our community, and at the government level because it is helping us to lead our own educational needs, and the methods by which education is obtained.”

Its ability to support meaningful change rests in DOE’s continual refining of the Pipeline and sharpening of the picture it provides of the Tribe’s education and workforce development efforts. This intensive, iterative process takes place organically on an ongoing basis and formally on an annual basis. “The Pipeline has grown every year. It gets more and more detail,” says Peone. “Every time I turn around, I see something new on there.” Each year, DOE conducts a comprehensive review of the current state of the Pipeline, assesses the strength of its seg-
ments and the programs and partners operating within each of them, and addresses unresolved or new issues. According to Cookie Allan, “This process shows us accountability. We see those holes, and you know the specific programs that have been developed to address those holes. So if it is not happening there, you have to look at all of the angles of it: Is it the programming itself? Is it the funding? Is it the staffing? So there’s accountability there.”

“We’re watching our young people grow into society. They’re becoming meaningful, engaged citizens.”

– Paulette Jordan, Director, Enrollment Department, Coeur d’Alene Tribe

This routinized process has required DOE to build bridges of collaboration with and among CDA’s other government departments to enhance the Pipeline’s effectiveness. For example, DOE learns from other departments as well as the Tribe’s businesses what skill sets they need most. These insights have proven critical for developing both post-secondary degrees (like those offered by WSU and NIC) and afterschool and summer programs (like Back to the Earth) that teach younger students important soft skills. And as DOE has deepened these working relationships, a growing number of non-traditional students who work for those departments and businesses are returning to school part-time, taking advantage of the support that DOE provides to advance their careers.

The Pipeline’s growth as an effective learning and decision-making tool has sparked a heightened understanding among CDA’s leadership and service providers about the precise nature and gravity of the challenges that the Tribe faces – and whether the resources it is putting towards addressing those challenges is making a discernable difference. As LoVina Louie, hqnesnet Program Coordinator at Benewah Medical Wellness Center, explains, “The Pipeline has driven a need to know more. And so our leaders now are starting to realize that – that they need to take a closer look at our programs. And so we’re having to answer to tribal leaders to say, ‘How many tribal members are we serving?’ They want to know more about if they are putting dollars into these different programs, how is that benefitting the Tribe?”

With the Pipeline, CDA has designed a transferrable blueprint for informed, strategic decision making that it can deploy in all its governmental areas and activities, which it is beginning to do. Recently, the Tribe commenced development of a five-year strategic plan to strengthen the Tribe’s justice system with the goal of reducing substance abuse-related crime on the reservation. Purposefully replicating the Pipeline approach, the plan’s design phase brought together the Tribe’s top elected officials, Administrative Director Robert Matt, Dr. Meyer, the directors of CDA’s Social Services and Justice departments, and BMWC representatives. In regular meetings over 20 months, the group shared and analyzed data to glean a comprehensive picture of the issues that substance abuse was causing in the Tribe. It also affirmed the need for a coordinated solution. According to Cookie Allan, who is managing the effort, “It’s showing us the interconnectedness and collaboration that needs to happen. It’s forcing us to come outside of our silos that we’ve had in the past.”
Because of the Pipeline, a brighter future beckons for the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. There will be challenges along the way. For one, CDA’s membership is growing rapidly, with the reservation population expected to jump 36 percent by 2030. This demands that CDA cultivate more job opportunities in tribal government, tribal enterprises, and elsewhere locally in order to keep pace so that it can keep its people at home. And tribal representatives acknowledge that CDA and DOE need to do a better job of matching and connecting tribal members who live on the reservation—or those who leave to get an education and then return—with “the right opportunity” based on their education, skills, and experience (and the Tribe’s most pressing capacity building needs). They also admit that consciously linking the Pipeline and its leading education and workforce development initiatives to CDA’s long-term national priorities—and determining what those national priorities should be—is a step the Tribe still needs to take. But with the Pipeline and the human capacity that it is helping to cultivate, CDA is well positioned to overcome these challenges and make that brighter future a reality.

Endnotes

1 McNeel, 2015.
3 Coeur d’Alene Tribe website (http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/cultural/ancestral.aspx, accessed January 27, 2016). According to the Tribe’s website, one Frenchman described the tribe as “the greatest traders in the world” (Ibid.).
5 According to a 2009 report, of the acreage contained with the reservation boundary, “36,370 are in tribal trust status and 308,620 are in non-trust. Most of the land (247,540 acres) is in individual ownerships, another 13,210 acres are in public ownership and major timber companies own approximately 47,870” (2009 CEDS, 2009, p. 8). According to the Tribe, the amount of land held in trust has since increased to more than 42,000 acres.
6 Salant and Laumatia 2011, p. 101. The two counties are Kootenai and Benewah County, and the three municipalities are the cities of Worley, Plummer and Tensed (Coeur d’Alene Tribe, 2015 CEDS, 2015, p. 5).
9 The Coeur d’Alene Press, May 5, 2015. CDA’s council seats “are staggered so that no more than three positions are up for reelection at a given time. This helps to ensure stability in the Tribal Government.” The Chairman only votes in tie-break situations (2015 CEDS, 2015, p. 5).
10 Coeur d’Alene Tribe and WSU, 2013.
11 Ibid.
12 University of Idaho, 2012.
13 For more info about Benewah Medical Wellness Center, see http://bmcwc.com/. BMWC won an Honoring Nations Award from the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development in 2000 (Honoring Nations, 2001).
14 University of Idaho, 2012; McNeel, 2015. The 4,360 jobs figure was provided to NCAI by the Tribe, June 14, 2016.
15 Robert Matt, Interview with NCAI, March 26, 2015; 2015 CEDS, 2015, p. 14. According to Chairman Chief Allan, “What seems like a lifetime ago, our unemployment rate was sky-high and jobs were hard to come by. We’ve worked hard to create jobs and decrease unemployment on the reservation and we’ve made significant strides in a relatively short time. Today we’re proud to be one of the largest employers in the region” (McNeel, 2015).
16 As an example, CDA’s 2015 CEDS reported that BMWC and the Casino Resort Hotel were the only economic development activities “that have seen substantial gain” (p. 15).
17 Tina Jordan, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
18 Many of these jobs are held by those “who live off of the Reservation. This creates a gap in the Reservation population from the typical work hours of the weekdays to the non-work hours of the weekends. In other words, when the imported workers leave the Reservation after 4:30 PM their money leaves with them. This is money that
would otherwise be spent locally if these individuals lived on the Reservation" (2015 CEDS, 2015, pp. 13-14).

21 Ibid., Appendix A.
22 Salant and Laumatia 2011, p. 101
23 2015 CEDS, 2015, pp. 9, 11-12.
26 Like the WIOA program, CDA’s TERO, which is not housed under DOE, has minimal funding to carry out its functions, but does provide internships to CDA youth. The Casino Resort Hotel, meanwhile, provides professional development opportunities and funding for its employees (Chris Meyer, Interview with NCAI, January 19, 2016).
27 Zotigh, 2014.
28 2009 CEDS, 2009, pp. 3-4; Meyer and Laumatia 2012, 84.
29 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84.
31 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84. According to DOE, “The pipeline illustrates the Tribe’s increased willingness to assume the responsibility for transforming the lives of its people who are experiencing negative impacts by intergenerational trauma” (Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education, 2016).
32 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84; Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education, 2016.
33 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84.
35 According to DOE, the gaps can be attributed in part to the Tribe’s inability to fully fund every segment of the Pipeline (Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education, 2016).
36 Daniels, Interview with NCAI, March 15, 2016.
37 Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
39 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84.
40 Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016; Louie, Interview with NCAI, March 9, 2016.
41 Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016.
42 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84.
43 Ibid.
44 Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
45 Daniels, Interview with NCAI, March 15, 2016.
46 Peone, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
49 Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016; Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education, BTTE Project Overview, 2011, p. 4. BTTE’s stated objectives are to “enhance STEM content understanding, improve attitudes toward STEM careers, and assist in building community partnerships” (Ibid., p. 2).
51 Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016.
52 Tina Jordan, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
53 Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84.
54 Salant and Laumatia 2011, p. 111.
56 Meyer, Interview with NCAI, January 19, 2016.
57 Daniels, Interview with NCAI, March 15, 2016. DOE’s high school dropout analysis, for example, revealed “drugs, alcohol, and pregnancy as primary factors in student dropouts [which] led to our recognition that social and emotional poverty is the underlying issue that we need to address as a community” (Meyer and Laumatia 2012, p. 84).
58 Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
59 Ibid.
60 Meyer, January 19, 2016.
Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
NEA 2015, p. 12.
Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
Louie, Interview with NCAI, March 9, 2016. According to Louie, “It motivated us to be more aware. We realized that if we allowed them to quit or not participate early, then that’s what would happen throughout their lives. It gave us a different perspective” (Ibid.).
Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016.
Meyer, Interview with NCAI, January 19, 2016.
Peone, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education, 2016. According to DOE, “The summer programming is possible through four significant grants: Cd’A Tribe Enhancement Grant (Cd’A TEG), Tribal funds, National Science Foundation, which ended summer of 2015, and the U.S. Department of Education Native American Career and Technical Program (NACTEP)” (Ibid.).
Ibid.
Ibid.
Danis, Interview with NCAI, March 15, 2016.
Sharrett, Interview with NCAI, March 26, 2015.
NEA 2015, p. 12.
Ibid.
Ibid.
Meyer, Interview with NCAI, January 19, 2016.
WSU 2013, p. 1.
Aston, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
WSU Native American Programs, 2014.
Aston, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
Peone, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
Tina Jordan, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
Peone, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
Tina Jordan, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
Matheson, Interview with NCAI, February 10, 2016.
Cookie Allan, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016.
Meyer, Interview with NCAI, April 28, 2016.
Paulette Jordan, Interview with NCAI, October 19, 2015.
For details on the program’s curriculum, see http://native.wsu.edu/support/curriculum.html (accessed April 19, 2016).
Aston, Interview with NCAI, March 11, 2016.
Peone, Interview with NCAI, January 21, 2016. Anyone that is accepted into UI is eligible to enroll in the course.
Coeur d’Alene Tribe, STEP Proposal, 2015, front cover.
Meyer, Interview with NCAI, January 19, 2016.
Laumatia, Interview with NCAI, January 25, 2016.
Daniels, Interview with NCAI, March 15, 2016.
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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication was produced by NCAI’s Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) as part of its project examining innovative tribal approaches to workforce development. Titled “Workforce Development: Building the Human Capacity to Rebuild Tribal Nations,” the project was made possible by a grant from the Northwest Area Foundation.

This Innovation Spotlight was the third of four case studies that PTG developed and shared in conjunction with this project. All four case studies also were highlighted in PTG’s workforce development toolkit for tribal leaders and workforce development practitioners, which was released in 2018.

This Spotlight was developed by Ian Record (Director, NCAI Partnership for Tribal Governance) and Timothy O’Brien (Student, “Native Americans in the 21st Century: Nation Building II” course, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University).

To learn more about the PTG’s project on tribal workforce development, please visit www.ncai.org/ptg/workforce-development.

Suggested Citation: