

## **GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY ABSTRACT**

1. **Applicants Name:** Gila River Indian Community
2. **Applicant Category:** A Federally recognized Indian Community receiving Title WIA Section 166 Grant funds.
3. **Lead Applicant:** The Gila River Indian Community is the lead applicant with the Employment and Training Department developing the model.
4. **Areas served by the grant:** Will serve Native Americans living within the Gila River Indian Community and within a 50 mile radius of the reservation, including Laveen, Bapchule, Sacaton Flats, Casa Grande, and Phoenix area.
5. **Project Name:** Gila River Indian Community Career Pathways Model (GRIC Model)
6. **Funding Level Requested:**
  - Technical Proposal Costs: \$600,000 Per Year
  - Evaluation Costs: \$200,000 Per Year
7. **Project Type A:** We will be applying as a Type A Project. While the Career Pathways Model is being implemented and developed by several States, it has never been attempted in a Tribal Community. The model will recognize issues of tribal sovereignty, differences in learning styles and cultural barriers as we work with our outside partners. Lessons will be learned that can be replicated in other Native American Communities. With a strong evaluation piece to the project, we will be able to provide data that will serve other tribes who want to implement a Career Pathways System, creating systemic change that will have a ripple effect across Indian Country.
8. **Description of proposed project:**

The Gila River Indian Community will develop an employment services delivery system utilizing the Career Pathways concept for the first time ever in Indian Country. The Career Pathways Team will be developing a system with features to include: 1) development of two to

four Industry Sectors based on the local labor market (Hospitality, Construction, Government and Medical), 2) creation of industry ladders and cross industry training, 3) wrap around supportive services, 4) on and off ramps for participants to leave and re-enter the system, 5) portable credentials, 6) three points of entry into the system, 7) policy change, and 8) shared funding with partners.

Activities will revolve around the creation of mentorships, job shadowing, tryout opportunities, credentialed electives in the high schools leading to dual credit, use of new technology in delivering services, movement of participants through the system, focus groups, creation of new training combined with credentials to include work readiness and life skills, and a Career Pathways Advisory Council for sustainability of the system.

The Gila River Indian Community Career Pathways Model that will streamline the workforce delivery system and position the labor force more competitively in the labor market, thereby increasing the Community's quality of life. Over all we will:

- 1.) **Increase opportunities for advancement and employment by raising the educational and job skill levels of the Community's workforce.**
- 2.) **Create partnerships that connect job training, education, employers and other employment systems, resulting in a streamlined service delivery system.**
- 3.) **Engage employers in the design of credentials for the local workforce in coordination with local Colleges.**
- 4.) **Develop Career Pathways to employment from high school through adulthood.**

The development of the Gila River Indian Community Career Pathways Model will create the type of systemic change that our Community needs to thrive. The opportunity to create a Career Pathways Model in Indian Country comes at a time of reorganization for our Community. In the past three years we have been looking for ways to reorganize and streamline services. As

we develop our Model while working through issues of tribal sovereignty, tribal laws and policies, extreme poverty, different learning styles, tribal government, different cultural values, high unemployment, and other unknown silos, we will have many “lessons learned” and much to share with other Native American communities.

Employment is the very backbone of a strong healthy community in providing for its citizens. A community cannot survive without a strong connection to employment as a means of providing for its citizens. Our Community immediately recognized the value that the Career Pathways structural framework will provide. It is a natural fit. Perhaps it’s because in old traditional ways it was the practice of Native American Communities to come together and make decisions as a whole community through consensus. Everyone joined in, shared resources and worked together in close harmony. Career Pathways is an old tradition that has come home.

**9. Description of proposed evaluation strategy:**

The Gila River Indian Community's Employment and Training Department's "Career Pathways" project proposes to develop and implement a new service delivery methodology that incorporates unique and specific ways to engage their American Indian population in a streamlined training, placement, credentialed, retention, and tracking system. The evaluation of the "Career Pathways" project will use process methodologies as well as outcome measures to provide both an effective process to inform the project as to barriers, strengths, and implementation needs and a measure of the effectiveness and/or impact of the service delivery.

By utilizing process and outcome evaluation methodologies, the "Pathways" project has the capability to analyze process, output and outcome data. This mixed method analysis will also incorporate the cost analysis, resulting in a demonstration of cost savings or cost effectiveness.

**10. Public contact information:** Lana Chanda, Employment & Training Director,

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