Investing in Native Communities

At the Bush Foundation, we work to inspire and support creative problem solving — within and across sectors — to make the region better for everyone. We have a particular commitment to investing in Native Americans and the 23 Native nations in our region.

Native people represent approximately 2% of the total U.S. population and have some of the greatest and most urgent needs. Yet, research shows that only 0.4% of mainstream U.S. philanthropic dollars are going to serve Native communities. We think we, as a philanthropic community, can and should do better. This report is one way that we at the Bush Foundation are trying to do better.

A few years ago, we started to intentionally track our work in Native communities, across our investment strategies. We gathered the data within this report from surveys (staff, board and advisory committee), our internal grant database (2018-2019 grant payments) and other internal records. By tracking our data in this intentional way, we have a better understanding of how we are doing with our commitment to serving Native nations and communities. It also helps us learn where there may be some opportunities for improvement.

We’re excited to share what we’re learning with you, along with a number of stories highlighting the organizations and people we invest in, who are doing the work to better serve their communities and make the region better for everyone.

From 2002 to 2016, large U.S. foundations gave, on average, 0.4 percent of total annual funding to Native American communities and causes, even though the American Indian and Alaska Native population represents two percent of the total U.S. population.

Source for the percentage of funding: https://nativephilanthropy.candid.org/reports/investing-in-native-communities-philanthropic-funding-for-native-american-communities-and-causes/

Source for Native population: https://nativephilanthropy.candid.org/

WADE PATTON
FEATURED COVER ARTIST

The sparse beauty of the prairie resonates in Wade Patton’s work. An enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe, he grew up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation surrounded by a rich culture of music and art. Wade received a bachelor’s of art degree from Black Hills State University and showed his work in a solo exhibit at the Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City before leaving home.

While living on the east coast, he missed the beauty and splendor of the Black Hills and the skies of South Dakota. Wade began drawing the landscapes and clouds he remembered so fondly and quickly caught the attention of collectors and galleries.

Recognition of his artwork grew, and Wade returned to home to further pursue his craft in the place that inspires him most. Today, Wade is reacquainting himself with the land and his ancestry. He is actively involved in the community and the thriving Native Arts scene. He enjoys visiting with art enthusiasts and discussing the thought and inspiration behind each piece.
23 Native Nations

These federally recognized sovereign Native nations are culturally distinct tribes with rich histories and deep strengths. The 23 Native nations within this region are listed according to the state with which they share geography.

NORTHERN DAKOTA
1. Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation
2. Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate*
3. Spirit Lake Nation
4. Standing Rock Sioux Tribe*
5. Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

MINNESOTA
6. Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
7. Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
8. Grand Portage Band of Chippewa
9. Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
10. Lower Sioux Indian Community
11. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
12. Prairie Island Indian Community
13. Red Lake Nation
14. Shakopee-Mdewakanton Sioux Community
15. Upper Sioux Community
16. White Earth Nation

SOUTHERN DAKOTA
17. Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
18. Crow Creek Sioux Tribe
19. Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe
20. Lower Brule Sioux Tribe
21. Oglala Sioux Tribe
22. Rosebud Sioux Tribe
23. Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate*
24. Standing Rock Sioux Tribe*
25. Yankton Sioux Tribe
Investments Supporting Native Nations and People

IN 2018-2019

• In 2018 and 2019, 26% of all grant payments went to support Native nations and Native people.
• The Bush Foundation awarded 10 Bush Fellowships to Native Fellows out of a total of 48 Fellows.
• 21% of all Bush Fellow grant payments were made to Native Bush Fellows.
• 27% of all organization grant payments were made to organizations supporting Native nations.

IN 2018, 27.5% OF BUSH FOUNDATION GRANT PAYMENTS SUPPORTED NATIVE NATIONS AND PEOPLE ($9.8 MILLION OF A TOTAL OF $35.7 MILLION)

2018 Grant Payments to Individuals

$2.45M in Total Payments

$544k in Payments to Native Bush Fellows

22.1%

2018 Grant Payments to Organizations

$33.2M in Total Payments

$9.3m in Payments to Organizations Supporting Native Nations

28%

IN 2019, 24% OF BUSH FOUNDATION GRANT PAYMENTS SUPPORTED NATIVE NATIONS AND PEOPLE ($8.3 MILLION OF A TOTAL OF $34.2 MILLION)

2019 Grant Payments to Individuals

$2.53M in Total Payments

$500k in Payments to Native Bush Fellows

19.8%

2019 Grant Payments to Organizations

$31.7M in Total Payments

$7.9m in Payments to Organizations Supporting Native Nations

24.9%
First Peoples Fund

Founded in 1995, First Peoples Fund’s mission is to honor and support the Collective Spirit® of First Peoples artists and culture bearers. Collective Spirit® is that which manifests a self-awareness and sense of responsibility to sustain the cultural fabric of a community. Collective Spirit® moves each of us to stand up and make a difference, to pass on ancestral knowledge and simply extend a hand of generosity. First Peoples Fund recognizes the power of art and culture to bring about positive change in Native communities, beginning with individual artists and their families. They strive to provide support and voice to creative Indigenous artists who share their inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and gifts with their communities. First Peoples Fund’s grantmaking initiatives include the annual Jennifer Easton Community Spirit Awards, Artists in Business Leadership, Cultural Capital Fellowship, Our Nations’ Spaces and Indigenous Arts Ecology Grants.

firstpeoplesfund.org

Indigenous People’s Task Force

Zaagibagaang, fiscally sponsored project

Zaagibagaang is a grassroots effort focused on governance and Native nation building done by people from the bands of Ojibwe that form the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. Their work is centered on the confidence that people have the capacity to take responsibility and make decisions when they have information that is offered in a good way. With the Anishinaabe teachings guiding them, they bring their gifts together to provide information and work towards mino-bimaadiziwin today as well as for the next seven generations. They are engaging and empowering people to take a more active role as Anishinaabe citizens, understanding their constitution as well as providing education about the history and role of tribal government.

zaagibagaang.com
**Advisory Committees**

Across our grantmaking initiatives, we often utilize advisory committees made up of people with a particular expertise or representing a broad range of sectors and experiences across the region. Our North Dakota and South Dakota advisory committee members help us know what is happening in each of the two states and Native nations that share the geography, by meeting twice annually. These folks also assist the Bush Foundation in determining the Bush Prize for Community Innovation winner(s) in each state.

- **2018**
  - 5 OF 17 COMMITTEE MEMBERS were from Native nations within the region

- **2019**
  - 5 OF 15 COMMITTEE MEMBERS were from Native nations within the region

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**Commitment to Native Nations**

*Staff and board members play important roles in guiding our work serving Native nations, communities and people.*

- **2018-2019**
  - 4 OUT OF 15 BOARD MEMBERS WERE NATIVE
  - 3 WERE CITIZENS OF ONE OF THE 23 NATIVE NATIONS IN OUR REGION
  - 2 OUT OF 40 STAFF MEMBERS WERE NATIVE. BOTH WERE CITIZENS OF NATIONS WITHIN OUR REGION.
Native Americans in Philanthropy

“Investing in Native Communities” Web Portal

Native Americans in Philanthropy and Candid launched a first of its kind website to encourage greater philanthropic funding and support to Native communities in the United States. The free site, a go-to hub for funding data, research, history and other resources, provides funders the crucial information they need to best support Native communities and causes.

“Philanthropy has consistently under-funded Native communities and, particularly, Native-led organizations,” said Edgar Villanueva, chair of Native Americans in Philanthropy’s board and author of Decolonizing Wealth. “A lack of available information has enabled this as funders often don’t know what is being funded, how to effectively engage with Native stakeholders to create impact, and the history that has contributed to the unique challenges Native communities face today. This website is an important tool to begin to fill this knowledge gap and drive more attention and investment to Native communities.”

The information on this site will help both new and more experienced funders seeking to increase their knowledge about Native Americans and their shared history.

nativephilanthropy.candid.org

Community Creativity Cohort 2

A participant-led capacity building program that supports organizations led by and serving communities of color/indigenous communities and/or rural communities, to make art and culture central to problem solving.

14 OUT OF 40 ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COHORT ARE LED BY AND SERVE NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN OUR REGION.
Northwest Indian Community Development Center

Northwest Indian Community Development Center’s (NWICDC) transformative model challenges structural oppression, institutional racism and opportunity gaps for American Indians in the Bemidji area. Grounded in the Anishinaabe values of humility, kindness, love, respect, bravery and honesty, NWICDC advances healing and equity for American Indians and tribal nations. As a model for how communities can solve problems through Indigenous culture, NWICDC looks to the people it serves to own the answers, valuing collective input and the lived experience. The result is services that are personal, visionary and trusted. NWICDC’s responsive workforce development programs and innovative social enterprises not only create jobs but also promote self-actualization and choice, key elements in what NWICDC defines as a healthy life. NWICDC also partners with state agencies to advocate for equity and inclusion in funding and change policies and practices that perpetuate disparities.

nwicdc.org
In 2017, the Bush Foundation formed a Native Education Advisory Group to inform our education strategy. In 2018, we continued to build upon what we learned and the relationships formed with the following investments:

A grant to support building the capacity of the Commission for Oceti Sakowin Accreditation to promote and support tribal schools in adopting accrediting standards created specifically for tribal schools in the region and beyond. These standards maintain academic rigor while also incorporating much more relevance for Native students as they include requirements on teaching language and culture.

Grants to support the further development and expand implementation of the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings in schools in South Dakota and the North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings in North Dakota.

South Dakota Indian Education Department:
https://indianeducation.sd.gov/ocetisakowin.aspx

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Indian Education:

The Native Education Advisory Group Report continues to help guide our work supporting Native education:
http://bfdn.org/NativeEdReport
Native Education Learning

The Native Nations Network Learning Journey was a program that the Bush Foundation put on in partnership with The School Leadership Project and Dr. Teresa Peterson (member of the Foundation’s 2017 Native Education Advisory Group). During the project about 20 educators and policy makers learned about the principles of student-centered learning. They visited regional and national best practice sites, including schools on the Pine Ridge Reservation and schools in Albuquerque, New Mexico and in the Pueblo Nations.

Racing Magpie

Racing Magpie, owned by Mary V. Bordeaux (Sicangu Lakota) and Peter J. Strong, supports creativity, sustainability, leadership, and learning, focusing on Native and other artists and culture bearers. They operate a Native exhibition space, affordable artist studios, community spaces, traveling exhibitions and a consulting practice from a renovated feed and seed building in downtown Rapid City, creating a vibrant hub for the arts in western South Dakota. By centering and amplifying Lakota people, artists and culture bearers, Racing Magpie believes art and culture will continue to build bridges for communities to be strengthened and social and racial divides to shrink.
FELLOW HIGHLIGHT

Sarah Pierce

Sarah strives to help Rapid City become a model of a culturally responsive city. To achieve that vision, she assists Native people, especially youth, with finding places of cultural safety where they can learn and heal through full access to the history, culture and language of the Lakota people. Sarah is a change agent who gives a voice to a population that has traditionally been silenced. She is a trusted leader her community can turn to for wise counsel, as well as a relationship builder with key Native leaders at the state and federal levels.

Sarah is working toward her doctorate in educational leadership and studies programs in Hawaii, where student outcomes have improved dramatically in schools focused on cultural safety.

bfdn.org/sarahpierce

More Good, Every Year

The Bush Foundation is about place — a region of three states and 23 Native nations. This region’s future will be defined by how well every person in it does — at home, in school, at work and in the community. This region’s future, therefore, depends on institutions and systems that work well for all people.

As a philanthropic institution, we continue to strive to improve and to do more good every year. That includes how we do our work in, and in support of, Native nations, people and the organizations that serve them. Visit our website for updates on our Native-focused investments: BushFoundation.org
