



## **ONAC Newsletter, January 2017**

### **ONAC Awards One New Mini Grant in November 2016**

ONAC announces that it has awarded an ONAC mini grant to the Mvskoke Loan Fund. This grant was made possible with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

In January 2016, ONAC released our second request for proposals (RFP) to fund Native asset building projects in Oklahoma. We received excellent applications from tribal governments and tribal programs based in Oklahoma. At the time, ONAC received an application from the Mvskoke Loan Fund, but was not able to fund the grant until our second grant installment from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation arrived. ONAC is excited to work with their staff as they continue to offer Native asset building projects to their tribal members. If needed, ONAC is available to provide free training and technical assistance to them as they implement their asset-building program. Congratulations to the Mvskoke Loan Fund on this award.

#### **The Mvskoke Loan Fund Project Description:**

Part of the mission of the Mvskoke Loan Fund is to “foster the financial well-being of its citizens...” and we firmly believe that by focusing relevant trainings on our youth that we can build a culture of financial security. Through the purchase of the Spending Frenzy game kit offered by First Nations Development, Mvskoke Loan Fund will foster a learning environment that is both interesting and fun, and will offer the additional incentive of \$100 each for up to 20 youth to seed an emergency savings account (awarded \$3,500).

### **ONAC Conference Scheduled for Tuesday, July 18, 2017**

Please save the date! ONAC’s 2017 Conference will be held on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

During the conference, we will examine the current state of Native asset building; have opportunities for peer learning; share information about Native asset building models, funding sources, partnership opportunities, research, training and technical assistance; and learn about ONAC next steps and ways to be involved in the Coalition.

At the end of the day, we will have a networking reception and provide ONAC membership information. We invite you to participate in this interactive conference.



### **Who should attend the conference?**

Those interested and engaged in Native asset building are encouraged to attend. We invite Tribal leaders, Tribal program directors, Native nonprofits, Native asset building practitioners and researchers, state representatives, students, cultural advisors, policy organizations, funders, financial institutions and financial institution regulatory bodies, national asset building organizations, inter-tribal organizations, representatives from the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, IRS, and Administration for Children and Families, and others interested in tribal asset building in Oklahoma to attend.

### **Conference Schedule:**

- 9:00 a.m. Registration and Breakfast
- 9:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Conference
- 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Networking Reception and Membership Drive

**Agenda:** Agenda is forthcoming.

**Registration Fee:** The 2017 ONAC Conference Fee is \$25.00 per registrant. You may register and pay for the registration fee online or by check.

**To register, use this link:** <http://oknativeassets.org/2017-ONAC-Conference>

**Hotel Room Block:** Embassy Suites Hotel (Oklahoma City Downtown/Medical Center) located at 741 North Phillips Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73104.

To make a reservation under the ONAC room block, call: (405) 239-3900 and ask for the room block for the Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition.

The room block is available for July 17th at a group rate of \$129.00 a night, plus tax, for a standard 2 room suite. The room block is available until June 17, 2017 only. If you call and find that the room block is full, please call Christy Finsel at 405-401-7873 so that we may try to increase the block. For those also needing a room on July 18th (after the conference has ended), please call to make your reservation early and ask if they will honor the \$129.00 rate for you on the 18th as well.

There is a \$10.00 a day parking charge at the hotel. The hotel provides a made-to-order breakfast as part of the room charge. The hotel provides shuttle service to the Oklahoma History Center.

## **Children's Savings Account Pilot Updates**

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Pawnee Tribe Title VI Elderly Meals Program opened thirty-nine accounts for the grandchildren of grandparents who participate in their program. ONAC worked with their program staff and the grandparents to open the accounts through the Oklahoma 529 College Savings Plan (many of the grandparents are the account owners as they are raising their grandchildren). During the account opening event, the grandparents enjoyed a meal made and served by the Pawnee Business Council. ONAC worked with the grandparents to complete the account applications after they heard an introduction by Debra Echo-Hawk, Title VI Elderly Meals Program Coordinator and their tribal Assistant Keeper of the Seeds (their tribal heirloom seeds), who spoke to the grandparents about the connection between their tribal heirloom



seed saving project and the idea that opening a Children's Savings Account is a way to "plant" an educational seed for their grandchildren. After the event, for those grandparents who were unable to complete all the forms at the account opening event, Debra Echo-Hawk, Danielle Wheatley, Pawnee Nation Elder Center Cook, and ONAC worked with individual grandparents to complete their applications. ONAC provided the \$100 account opening deposit for each student. ONAC thanks Tiffany Frieze, Division of Health & Community Services, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Debra Echo-Hawk, Title VI Elderly Meals Program Coordinator/FDPIR Department Manager, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, and other program staff for all their work on this program.

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, President Terri Parton, of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, hosted an ONAC CSA account opening event at the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes community center in Anadarko, Oklahoma. Thirty accounts were opened that night. The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, hosted the CSA event at the tribal community center (complete with Christmas cookies and punch). The accounts were available to tribal youth, first-come, first serve. The tribe sent letters to eligible tribal members to alert them to this opportunity. During the event, ONAC worked with the parents and grandparents to open the accounts. Several youth participated in the art project and a few children took home art supplies to continue working on a piece of art that illustrates their understanding of Native assets. President Parton greeted each family and added the children's names to the certificates celebrating their account. ONAC thanks President Parton for her leadership with this project.

## **Three ONAC Mini Grant Awardees Complete Their Projects**

In January 2014, ONAC released its first-ever request for proposals (RFP) to fund Native asset building projects in Oklahoma. ONAC received seven excellent applications from tribal governments and tribal programs based in Oklahoma. At that time, ONAC had funding for four projects. Thus, ONAC awarded a total of \$14,000 in mini grants to four ONAC constituents. Those awardees have since completed their projects. ONAC eventually secured an additional \$10,500 in mini grant funding, from First Nations Development Institute, and in November 2015, ONAC announced that they had awarded those funds to the remaining three applicants (the Mvskoke Loan Fund, Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation, and the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma).

As of December 2016, those three latter grantees have completed their mini grant projects. With the use of their grant funds, each grantee grew their own capacity to provide asset building programs for their citizens. Through their projects, the grantees reached a minimum of 110 tribal citizens. While this impact was immediate and impressive, ONAC anticipates that the positive effects of these initiatives will continue into the future. For example, one of the grantees, the Mvskoke Loan Fund, through this project, now has a certified credit counselor available to work with their clients. We believe these investments in tribal citizens will strengthen these nations.

### **Grantee Projects and Outcomes**

**The Mvskoke Loan Fund** had planned to enroll one of their staff members in the credit counseling certification program offered by Rural Dynamics, Inc. in Montana. Rural Dynamics, Inc., was instead able



to offer the program in Oklahoma, which allowed the Mvskoke Loan Fund to send three staff members to the training as their travel costs were greatly reduced. As of the end of the grant period, one of the three staff members had passed the Credit Counseling Certification test, and the two additional staff members had plans to take the exam. This grant funding increased the capacity of the Mvskoke Loan Fund to directly offer certified credit counseling services to Native entrepreneurs to improve their credit rating and help prepare them to receive business loans from the Mvskoke Loan Fund (awarded \$3,500).

**Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC)** offered Shonya Mbwaka (Money Smart) to stimulate sustainable economic opportunity for the Citizen Potawatomi tribal community and all past and current clients. Through this project, funded by ONAC, the CPCDC held a reunion for twenty-eight of their Individual Development Account (IDA) program graduates. During the reunion, held on October 11, 2016, participants attended a Financial Empowerment workshop presented by CPCDC staff and an Investment 101 presentation by Rhonda Godwin, Director of Administrative and Investment Operations at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. On November 16, 2016, the CPCDC held a Lunch and Learn event entitled, “Can Credit Cost Your Retirement?”, presented by CPCDC staff member, Tina Pollard. The session addressed how your credit habits impact your retirement and ability to contribute to a retirement account. Additionally, with mini grant funds, CPCDC provided thirty one-on-one individual credit sessions with clients, seen individually from November 23, 2015 to November 23, 2016. During those sessions, the clients received assistance with basic credit counseling, budgeting, goal setting, credit report review, and planning for retirement. 100% of participants reported that they increased their investing and financial knowledge as indicated on pre- and post-testing and evaluations for workshops. Individual credit session participants were gauged on increased credit scores, comparison to past habits, and a financial wellness questionnaire. 98% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the information given was helpful and beneficial (awarded \$3,500).

**The Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma** provided employees of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma (ESTO), tribal youth, and tribal families the opportunity to become educated and self-sufficient as they learned from Dave Ramsey’s “Financial Peace University.” Through video teaching, class discussions, and interactive small group activities, this financial education program presented culturally appropriate and practical steps toward economic self-sufficiency. Participants were taught how to get rid of debt, manage money, spend and save wisely, and plan for retirement. This program empowered the tribal community with the financial knowledge and tools that would lead to success. With grant support, ESTO provided \$50 to twenty-two participants (who completed the financial education program) in startup funds for an emergency savings account. Twenty-four adults, five teenagers, and five children participated in the program. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the adults (ages 18+) who participated in the program ended up finishing or completing the class. 100% of the teenagers (ages 13-17) and children (ages 5-12) completed the class. As a result of their participation in the class, nearly all the adult participants cut up their credit cards and began saving for an emergency. Others began to use the “envelope system” (cash only) for groceries, gas, and entertainment (awarded \$3,500).

ONAC thanks each of these constituents for their willingness to engage with the coalition, and for all their work to design and implement these projects. The coalition looks forward to working with these constituents, and others, to offer additional asset building projects in the future.

In April 2017, ONAC will release a request for proposal (RFP) for the next round of mini grants.



## **ONAC Met the NativeGiving Match Challenge**

ONAC wishes to thank our constituents for their support during the NativeGiving match campaign. We met the match challenge with support from twenty-two individual donors. Every donation makes a difference. Thank you!

## **ONAC Welcomes General and Endowment Donations, Sponsorships, and Memberships**

In September 2016, ONAC launched an endowment campaign. To advance ONAC's mission, ONAC is seeking to raise \$5 million to fund an endowment for general operating expenses and program support. A strong endowment would make ONAC sustainable and viable well into the future. ONAC thanks the Chickasaw Nation for their generous lead gift of \$250,000 towards our endowment fund. We are grateful to Governor Bill Anoatubby, of the Chickasaw Nation, for meeting with us to talk about opportunities for collaboration and for supporting this campaign. We are excited to grow this endowment fund and we respectfully ask for your support so that we may increase Native asset building opportunities for Native families.

### **What are ONAC's hopes for the future of Native asset building?**

ONAC's vision is that Native families will have multiple opportunities to grow their assets through participation in integrated and culturally-relevant Native asset building programs. Our dream is that all Native youth will have Children's Savings Accounts to help them save for their future and let them know that college is a real option for them. The coalition also would like to be able to provide more funding for asset building initiatives in the state, to tribes and Native nonprofits, to increase the numbers of sustainable asset building programs (such as financial education, matched savings accounts, credit repair/credit builder, and family emergency savings account programs).

There is great potential for ONAC to work with constituents to help numerous Native families build their assets. The second-largest Native population, per capita in the United States, resides in Oklahoma and is increasing (2010 Census). Support of Native asset building programs will help Native families to concretely build assets that will lead to family financial security.

### **Why is ONAC raising an endowment?**

In ONAC's strategic plan, the coalition notes that we need funding to support and grow the nonprofit. ONAC's leadership has worked to put in place a multi-pronged fundraising plan (individual donors, foundations, members, federal grants, corporate funds, sponsorships, etc.). The next step of that plan is to raise funds for an endowment.



To advance ONAC's mission, ONAC is seeking to raise \$5 million to fund an endowment for general operating expenses and program support. A strong endowment would make ONAC sustainable and viable well into the future.

As of 2016, ONAC's annual operating budget is \$251,522. Endowment funding of \$5 million would allow ONAC to draw 5% a year (\$250,000). With the sustainability that an endowment provides, ONAC would then continue to seek foundation and individual donor support, as well as memberships, sponsorships, and other donations to offer more Children's Savings Accounts and asset building grants in the state, in order to better meet the demand for our coalition services.

### **Endowment prospectus**

For more information about ONAC's endowment fund, please visit our website at <http://oknativeassets.org> and click "donate" at the top right of the page. On that page is a link to our endowment prospectus. All endowment fund donations are fully tax deductible, as no goods or services are provided in exchange.

### **Please consider making a donation to our endowment fund**

If you would like to support ONAC's work, we ask you to please consider making a donation to ONAC's endowment campaign. To donate to ONAC's endowment fund, either visit our website at <http://oknativeassets.org> and click "donate" at the top right of the page, or please send a check, made out to **the Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition Inc., with "endowment fund" written on the memo line.** You can mail the check to the following address:

Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition Inc.  
Attn: Christy Finsel, Executive Director  
9511 Horseshoe Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73162

### **If your organization is unable to donate to an endowment fund, please consider supporting ONAC through membership, sponsorship, or general donations.**

The challenge ONAC faces is to build a robust endowment while meeting the need for services today. While donations towards an endowment will help our coalition to be sustainable into the future, if you wish to underwrite ONAC's programs today, we also welcome such support. As part of our efforts to sustain and grow the coalition, ONAC welcomes donations, sponsorships, and memberships. For more information, please go to the donate page at [www.oknativeassets.org](http://www.oknativeassets.org) or call Christy Finsel, ONAC Executive Director, at 405-401-7873.

ONAC leadership thanks you for considering financial support of our statewide Native asset building coalition.

**Thank you for your asset building efforts and for your support of ONAC!**