

EVALUATING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE AMONG THE LAKOTA PEOPLE ON THE
PINE RIDGE INDIAN RESERVATION

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This thesis details my applied thesis project and experience in the evaluation of a workforce development through sustainable construction program. It describes the need of my client, Sweet Grass Consulting and their contractual partner, the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, in the evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program. My role involved the development of an extensive evaluation package for this program and data analysis of evaluation materials to support Thunder Valley CDC's grant-funded Workforce Development Program. I place the efforts of Thunder Valley CDC in the context of their community, the Pine Ridge Reservation of the Lakota People, and within an historical and contemporary context to highlight the implications of the efforts of Thunder Valley CDC. Using the theoretical frameworks of cultural revitalization and community economic development, I attempt to highlight two important components of Thunder Valley CDC's community development efforts - cultural revitalization for social healing, and development that emphasizes social, community and individual well-being. Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program is still in its early stages, and so this first year of implementation very much represented a pilot phase. However, while specific successes are difficult to measure at this point, general successes are viewable in the daily operations of Thunder Valley CDC that exemplify their stated mission and goals. These successes include initiatives that holistically address community needs; relevancy in the eyes of the community they serve; support for the community and for Program participants' unique challenges; and a cultural restoration and revitalization emphasis that underlies and strengthens

all of this. The program thus has the potential to provide a model for community development by challenging dominant "development" paradigms and utilizing community resources and assets for community development that reflects the community's values and worldviews.

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CHAPTER 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLIED THESIS PROJECT

1.1 Introduction

This thesis describes my project and experience in the evaluation of a community development initiative among the Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. This thesis project satisfies the final requirements for a master's degree in applied anthropology from the University of North Texas. The project matches my sub-discipline of environmental anthropology, as well as my specific research interests in sustainable development and evaluation anthropology, with the needs of my applied thesis client, Sweet Grass Consulting (SGC), and the client's contractual partner, the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation (Thunder Valley CDC).

In October, 2014, SGC finalized a five-year contract with Thunder Valley CDC. SGC was hired as data design consultants to provide evaluation services on Thunder Valley CDC's newly-launched Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction, and Sustainable Homeownership programs. The "need" of my client and official project sponsor, SGC, therefore included the development, implementation and analysis of an extensive and detailed evaluation package for the Workforce Development Program. My role involved the development of a series of targeted assessments and questionnaires for the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction (Workforce Development) Program through which to then provide a quantitative measure of the program's success over the course of its ten-month program period for the first group of participants (referred to as "Cohort 1"). The assessments and questionnaires made up an overall evaluation package comprising the majority of the applied-thesis-project-related deliverables I provided to SGC. With the data obtained from these evaluation tools, I was able to

provide SGC and Thunder Valley CDC with detailed reports showing measureable depictions of the success of the Workforce Development program in terms of whether and how the goals that have been set forth for the program by Thunder Valley CDC have been met, both in the short- and long-term. These quantitative measures further provided a foundation for my subsequent qualitative investigation into one of the specific goals of Thunder Valley CDC—to provide a model for sustainable community development. Using participant-observation and ethnographic techniques such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups, I was able to dig deeper into the data illuminated by the evaluation package to help determine if, how, and why the program was successful in achieving its goals, and if, how, and why Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development program provides a viable model for community development.

1.2 Student’s Applied Thesis Client

Sweet Grass Consulting, LLC (SGC) was established by Andrea Akers and Michael Brydge in January, 2014. SGC is located in Fort Collins, Colorado, and provides community building and assessment services most specifically for economically impoverished communities. Among the services provided by SGC are activity and program assessments, research and survey design and methods, and data management and analysis. SGC works mainly and extensively with the Lakota people of the Pine Ridge, Rosebud, and Cheyenne River American Indian Reservation communities of South Dakota. In October 2014, SGC finalized a contract with Thunder Valley CDC as their data design consultants for Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction, and Sustainable Homeownership programs.

The Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation (Thunder Valley CDC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charitable organization based out of the Thunder Valley community

of the Porcupine District on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of the Lakota people in southwestern South Dakota. Thunder Valley CDC is an Oglala-led, Native American community development corporation whose mission is “Empowering Lakota youth and families to improve the health, culture and environment of our communities, through the healing and strengthening of cultural identity” (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:2). Thunder Valley CDC formed from the visions of concerned community members and Lakota tribal elders in response to ever-present issues such as high unemployment, poverty and alcoholism that seemed to plague their communities. The Thunder Valley CDC founders associated these problems to what is considered as cultural degradation – from loss of language, traditional spiritual practices, and traditional ways of living, among other things. Thus, they believed that any attempt to address the reservation community’s social problems today must emphasize cultural identity and revitalization, and thereby be founded on restoring traditional frameworks that have sustained the Oglala Lakota Oyate (people) for millennia.

The Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction, and Sustainable Homeownership programs are two parts of a greater community development project, the Thunder Valley CDC’s Regenerative Community Development Project. The Regenerative Community Development project is the first implementation project of the Model Community Development Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to

create sustainable and interconnected communities that provide better housing, places for business to thrive, and a healthy supportive environment for youth, elderly and families. Model communities are living laboratories to build skills, knowledge and capacity for residents. This project will explore and refine new ways of living that build on traditional Lakota values to develop innovative, homegrown Native solutions to a variety of challenges. (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a:4)

The Thunder Valley Regenerative Community Development project and the initiatives embedded within it, including the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction

and Sustainable Homeownership programs, reflect the continuation of a wide and ambitious community development and sustainability effort on Pine Ridge. All of these initiatives are a part of the *Oyate Omniciye* – the Oglala Lakota Regional Plan. The *Oyate Omniciye* was adopted into law in 2012 by the Oglala Sioux Tribe and is their official Regional Sustainable Development Plan. The plan is a

guiding instrument for sustainable development on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and...Incorporates the following six Principles of Livability that guide the *Oyate Omniciye*' Lakota Regional Plan and the Tribal Council, and the continued pursuit of which will greatly benefit the *Oyate*: (1) Provide more transportation choices, (2) Promote Equitable, affordable housing, (3) Enhance economic competitiveness, (4) Support existing communities, (5) Coordinate policies and leverage investment, and (6) Value communities and neighborhoods. (Excerpt: Resolution No. 12-145 *Oyate Omniciye* 2012:18)

Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development and Sustainable Homeownership programs were planned and executed within the community economic development and cultural revitalization frameworks as outlined in the *Oyate Omniciye*. As such, they represent and are intended to facilitate Thunder Valley CDC's triple-bottom-line theory of change in which sustainable communities must emphasize social needs (people), environmental responsibility (the planet), and economic vitality (prosperity) (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:5).

Since its establishment, Thunder Valley CDC has developed partnerships with a variety of organizations from throughout the reservation and neighboring communities, the state of South Dakota, and the country (including SGC). For this applied-thesis project, my official client and project sponsor was SGC. As such, I supported projects identified under their contractual agreement with Thunder Valley CDC, specifically, Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program. My applied-thesis project with SGC and Thunder Valley CDC were aimed at directly addressing a need within SGC for an advanced, interdisciplinary, and seasoned researcher to assist with the development of a comprehensive

evaluation package. Directed towards Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program, my role as thesis student-researcher with SGC took place at the official launch of the program, beginning January 5, 2015.

1.3 Summary of Project Issues

On January 5, 2015, Thunder Valley CDC officially launched its Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction, and Sustainable Homeownership Programs. These workforce and homeownership projects are funded through a five-year grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) in their commitment to promote sustainable employment and economic development strategies. Thunder Valley CDC's community development efforts are driven by the need for jobs, housing, facilities and new opportunities that do not currently exist or exist only limitedly, on the reservation, so as to foster community empowerment through community economic development and cultural revitalization. Through the five-year grant period, Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development and Homeownership Programs are designed to holistically address three important issues on Pine Ridge: (1) high unemployment due to a lack of viable employment opportunities on the reservation; (2) the extreme housing shortage that exists on the reservation; and (3) the limited resources and training needed to assist reservation individuals to obtain good (i.e. valuable, structurally sound) housing and become homeowners.

1.4 Research Question and Theoretical Framework

The evaluation package I developed, and the subsequent ethnographic techniques I employed for Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program helped answer this applied research project's two main research questions:

- Research Question 1: After ten months of program implementation, is Thunder Valley CDC achieving the goals set forth for the Workforce Development Program?
- Research Question 2: Can Thunder Valley CDC's overall sustainable community development initiative as reflected through the Workforce Development Program provide a viable model for community development in other communities?

1.4.1 Research Question 1

Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program is designed to train and educate Lakota adults in sustainable home construction by building highly energy-efficient homes within the Thunder Valley Regenerative Community Development Site (Thunder Valley CDC's project of model community development explained in the previous section). The first group of participants in the program, (referred to by Thunder Valley CDC as "Cohort 1") consists of ten participants taking part in a ten-month training and education program to build a single-family home from start to finish. The ten participants are both male and female Lakota young adults between the ages of 18 and 26. Among the basic requirements for program admission was that the participants reside within the Pine Ridge Reservation, not be currently enrolled in school, not be currently employed, and that they are very motivated to complete the entire program (*from the Workforce Development Program Application*). The selected participants began their work with Thunder Valley CDC on January 5, 2015.

Among the assessments I designed for the evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program was a participant intake assessment. This assessment was completed by all incoming participants during their first week of the program. The participant intake assessment was designed to obtain an understanding of participants' backgrounds in areas such as their respective levels of education, professional experience and skills, and construction experience at the start of their participation in the program. The data obtained from these intake assessments were used to establish a foundation for the subsequent development of the individual success, education, and construction skills plans that Thunder Valley CDC staff then tailored to the individual participants based on their unique backgrounds and needs. With these and other assessment measures, questionnaires, and follow-up assessments, Thunder Valley CDC staff members were able to track participants' progress as they moved throughout the program.

Among the short-term goals Thunder Valley CDC has identified for their Workforce Development Program that are at least partly measureable at the ten-month point are;

- (1) Ten participants will increase their conceptual knowledge and understanding of sustainable home construction through 188 hours each of classroom instruction (evaluated through test scores on classroom training), and
- (2) Ten participants will increase their technical skills in sustainable home construction through 912 hours each of on-the-job training (evaluated through pre-and post-evaluations and on-the-job skills evaluation), and
- (3) A model for workforce development supporting sustainable home construction will be implemented as evaluated by the number of participants successfully completing the program and obtaining jobs in the industry, and
- (4) Ten participants will increase their ability to gain meaningful employment at home as evaluated by the number of participants successfully completing the program and obtaining jobs in the industry.

The long-term goals of the Workforce Development Program will be measured using the following impact indicators established by the Thunder Valley CDC:

- Number of participants attending school or work
- Income of participants
- Number of homes for sale in the Pine Ridge Reservation
- Available workforce in sustainable home construction
- Education level of participants
- Construction level of participants

1.4.2 Research Question 2

Thunder Valley CDC explains their model of community development in their July 2013 report, “Building a Regenerative Community.” Their Model Community Development Initiative “focuses on creating sustainable and interconnected communities that provide better housing, jobs, community facilities, infrastructure for new businesses, and a healthy and supportive environment for residents of Pine Ridge” (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a). To answer my second research question, “Can Thunder Valley CDC’s overall sustainable community development initiative as reflected through the Workforce Development Program provide a viable model for development in other communities?” I examined the concept of Workforce Development as an economic approach to community advancement. The understanding I thereby gained on approaches to, and case studies in, community economic development, sustainable development and workforce development was compared with the quantitative data I obtained through the evaluation package to help determine what differentiates Thunder Valley CDC’s approach from that of other community development organizations. I then examined Thunder Valley CDC’s overall program through a cultural revitalization theoretical framework, seeing this emphasis on cultural revitalization as what potentially distinguishes it considerably from other community development efforts, and that may be a defining feature of the success of Thunder Valley CDC’s

programs. For this segment I employed the cultural revitalization framework to examine this program in terms of what changed and what stayed the same for both the individual student-participants, as well as the community. Using existing models for cultural revitalization as developed, for example, by Anthony F.C. Wallace (1956) and his theory of “Revitalization Movements” and examinations of current efforts at cultural revitalization and Native American development strategies, I have attempted to determine what makes Thunder Valley CDC’s program a successful and viable model for sustainable community economic development. Essential to this determination were the ethnographic methodologies I employed in the forms of semi-structured interviews with staff members. Also important was a focus group with participants conducted to understand their experiences and perspectives. I wished to obtain their insights on this program in terms of its commitment to community development and cultural revitalization.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF WORK

2.1 Historical Framework and Background

This thesis describes my applied-thesis project, and my experience with Sweet Grass Consulting (SGC) on the evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. This workforce development program, however, as part of the overall Thunder Valley organization, cannot be thoroughly understood, nor its efforts and successes properly gauged, without an understanding of the history of the Oglala Lakota at Pine Ridge, as well as an understanding of the circumstances that have driven the need for such efforts as those pursued by Thunder Valley CDC. Much of Oglala Lakota history over the past 200 years is characterized by colonization, including foreign diseases (Oyate Omniciye 2012:97) and assimilationist policies that have been devastating for the tribe in ways that persist today. Rebuilding from that devastation, as shown by Thunder Valley CDC, must therefore be approached holistically as "none of these issues exist in isolation" (Thunder Valley CDC grant application to Draper Richards Foundation 2010: 1st paragraph). "Everything is connected; action leads to more action" (Oyate Omniciye 2012:9).

Thunder Valley CDC's holistic approach to rebuilding is consistent with Oglala Lakota culture in which the social, spiritual, and even economic components are interrelated and often interdependent. The Oglala Lakota did not traditionally distinguish between the religious and the secular, but rather sought balance through good-living and reciprocity (Arnold 2004; Rosier 2004). It is within this holistic understanding of equal and interrelated parts that I have approached this paper. I begin this chapter on the context of work for my applied-thesis project with an historical review of Oglala Sioux political relations with the United States government,

and U.S. assimilationist policies. These policies have persisted until very recently (in various forms until the late 1980s), and continue having important repercussions among on the Oglala Lakota and other Native American communities nationwide. From here, I examine the issues faced on the Pine Ridge Reservation and how myriad outside efforts to address these problems have ultimately only been successful when designed and directed by Native American people through the exercise of their self-determination. The next section looks at the concept of cultural revitalization and asks whether community economic development in Indian Country today as represented here by the initiatives of Thunder Valley CDC, can be seen as cultural revitalization. Based on the historical background and the theoretical frameworks of community economic development and cultural revitalization, I analyze Thunder Valley and its programs, the specific issues they aim to address, and how they aim to and have attempted to address those issues thus far. Finally, I introduce and describe the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program. I then detail my thesis project design and evaluation findings, and address my primary research questions in the subsequent chapters.

2.2 Westward Expansion and Treaties

“Sioux” is a generic term that collectively refers to three tribes – the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota – who speak different but related Siouan languages (Van Horn et al. 1996). The Lakota occupied the western portion of “Sioux territory,” while the Nakota occupied the middle portion and the Dakota occupied the Eastern portion (Van Horn et al. 1996). “Oglala” is the name of one of the Lakota bands (Fowler 2001). Other Lakota bands include the Miniconjou and the Hunkpapa (Fowler 2001). The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is occupied by the Oglala Lakota who make up what is recognized as the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

To understand the challenges of economic and community development in Indian Country today, so to speak, it is important to understand the historical circumstances and U.S. government policies that, in many ways, created or perpetuated those circumstances. For Plains Indian tribes like the Oglala Lakota, 19th century treaties between the tribes and the federal government remain highly valid and important in terms of recognizing tribal sovereignty and obligations of the federal government toward tribes. It is thus essential to examine the role of the United States government in its historical and contemporary relationships with American Indians, particularly its persistent ignoring of treaty obligations, and its relentless assimilationist policies. In contrast to other minority groups, the relationship between the U.S. government and Native American peoples is acknowledged as one of nation-to-nation (Berman 2004). This relationship thus continues to hold various implications for Native American sovereignty and autonomy, as well as unmet U.S. government treaty obligations that were set out in exchange for massive tracts of land.

As with all Native Americans, threats to traditional lands and lifeways began with European contact. For the Lakota, settlers' relentless encroachment westward in fulfillment of the popular U.S. notion of Manifest Destiny, began in the late 18th century, accelerated in the 19th and persisted throughout the 20th century. Hastened with the expansion of the railroad, Plains Indians' contact with westward bound emigrants and gold seekers increased tensions and the potential for conflict (Hafen and Young 1938). With their increased contact came a U.S. government interest in outlining both Native American and European American responsibilities toward one another in their increasingly frequent encounters. In 1851, various congressional policies were instituted to concentrate Indians on reservations in the effort to facilitate westward expansion (Fowler 2001). Among the myriad treaties between the U.S. government and Native

American peoples, and of particular importance for the Lakota and other Plains tribes, was the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. This treaty spelled out Native American responsibilities in their relations toward westward-moving homesteaders and emigrants in their passage along the increasingly busy Oregon, Mormon, Bozeman and Overland trails (Hafen and Young 1938). The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty established the Great Sioux Reservation in Dakota Territory – what is now much of western North and South Dakota (Fowler 2001). Lakota leadership emphasized that the treaty recognized and kept intact their traditional homelands and hunting grounds, and most importantly, that they maintain the sacred Black Hills as under Native American “control” to be forever free of white intrusion (Hall and Fenalon 2009). They also called for the recognition of Lakota social justice systems, and for restitution for both loss of land, and loss of subsistence from their heavily decreased hunting grounds and continued decimation of their livelihood, the buffalo (American bison) (Hall and Fenalon 2009). Similar to other indigenous peoples’ struggles, Hall and Fenalon argue, Lakota leaders “demonstrate[d] an acute awareness of the social condition of their community and their relationship with incoming dominant groups and the incorporating forces of the nation-state system” (2009:96-97). Conflict seemed inevitable, however, with increasing Euro-American interest in what they viewed as territory in excess to the needs of Indians, and then the discovery of gold in the Black Hills.

Treaty-making is an important political and symbolic means of acknowledging the sovereign status of a Nation. For the Plains Indians, treaties were an acknowledgement of their political sovereignty and their unique status and “trust” relationship with the federal government. This status entailed federal government responsibilities as trustees of Indian lands toward reservation Indians (Berman 2004). The 1868 Fort Laramie and other treaties thus spelled out, among other things, U.S. government responsibilities toward Native American nations (in the

form of rations and support) in exchange for massive cessions of land. As argued by Berman (2004), treaties governed the federal trust relationship between tribes and the U.S. government, establishing and defining Native Americans' rights within this unique relationship between political entities. Within that relationship is a responsibility on behalf of the federal government to administer aid in matters of land, natural resources, housing, health care and economic development (Berman 2004).

A commonly-held view toward Native Americans by Euro-American settlers was that Native Americans did not “use” their land. This viewpoint was also taken up by government officials and became a justification for further land-takings. Pressured by the growing belief that the government's treaty-mandated responsibilities slowed American “progress” and unevenly benefited Native American peoples (who, it was commonly believed, by this time, ought to be assimilated into the mainstream culture), the federal government ceased making treaties with Native American nations in 1871 (Fowler 2001). This fundamentally and drastically changed the ways in which the federal government interacted with Native American nations. Hindered only by their stubborn attachment to their heathen traditions, backwards culture, and their emphasis on common versus personal property, it was argued, American Indians needed only to understand the benefits of private property to abandon their traditions to successfully achieve assimilation. Plains Indians' communal ownership of land and an extended, matrilineal, nomadic family structure were viewed as chaotic, and their lack of connection between marriage and land title, and lack of patriarchal, inter-generational land transfer, unprogressive (Norris et al. 2014). With the encumbrance of treaty-making now eliminated, the U.S. government implemented a series of Indian Offenses policies directed toward Indian assimilation intended to loosen Indians' collective view toward land, and, through cultural suppression, eliminate Indians' religious and

traditional practices. The solution to the “Indian problem,” they believed, was to turn Native Americans into Euro-American farmers (Deloria 1969).

Through the “Indian Offenses” policies, the banning of Native American religious and cultural practices, followed by the Major Crimes Act in 1885 – which undermined Native American sovereignty further by ensuring that U.S. federal criminal law trumped tribal law – and the Dawes Allotment Act in 1887 allowing for “maximal landtakings” (Hall and Fenelon 2009), federal Indian policy culminated into cultural suppression. Native American traditional social justice systems became “First subordinate to, and then destroyed by, the U.S. punitive criminal justice systems” (Hall and Fenelon 2009:100), which undermined the sovereignty of Indian nations.

2.2.1 The Dawes General Allotment Act

In 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act, or “Dawes Act” named for the Massachusetts senator Henry L. Dawes who crafted the bill. The Dawes Act was designed to break up collective Indian landholdings into individual allotments. It “granted the U.S. President the authority to allot, or divide and assign title to, individual parcels of land on reservations to Native Americans, who were then granted U.S. citizenship” (Norris et al. 2014:27). The idea was to use private property as a means to force Indians’ integration into Euro-American social and economic systems (Deloria 1969). By dividing Indian land into lots of up to 160 acres per Indian to farm, the “surplus” was open to non-Indian settlement (Harvard Project 2008). However, as Deloria explains, Indians were expected to acquire the skills to manage and develop their land, though little was done to encourage their development of these skills (1969). Much of the land was leased to non-Indians or sold after the 25 year allotment period. However, leasing, it came to

be seen by administrators, thwarted the goals of the Allotment Act by discouraging Native Americans from working the land themselves and Native Americans were thus encouraged to sell their lands instead (Berthrong 1979). Further legislation and amendments to the act in 1902 and 1910, permitted the sale of allotted lands to non-Indians, and spurred further land loss (Berthrong 1979). According to Dawes,

They have got as far as they can go, because they own their land in common...and under that there is no enterprise to make your home any better than your neighbors. There is no selfishness, which is at the bottom of civilization. Till this people will consent to give up their lands, and divide them among their citizens so that each can own the land he cultivates, they will not make much more progress. (Dawes 1883:69-70)

The Dawes Act was subject to widespread abuse and resulted in the loss of 90 out of 138 million acres between 1887 and 1934, according to the Harvard Project's 2008 publication, *American Indian Economic Development*. Many Euro-American westerners "knew that few allotted Indians would be sufficiently adroit in business matters to protect their property" (Berthrong 1979:36). Much land was therefore lost in fraudulent dealings with white settlers. The land that was left in Indian hands tended to be of lesser quality to support agriculture. Their traditional subsistence base – the buffalo – had long before been exterminated, and their traditional hunting grounds were vastly restricted. Still, retention of land was essential to Native American survival on reservations that were already characterized by limited employment and few opportunities for education. Furthermore, they had few resources to pursue legal recourse. Land was the only significant capital resource Indians had (Berthrong 1979). Loss of tribal hunting grounds severely limited the Native American subsistence base and, for many, land sales were the only means of survival. Allotment and fixed housing was also intended to end the communal, mobile Native American cultures of agriculture, hunting and war (Norris et al. 2014).

The Dawes Act also gave U.S. government agents and agency superintendents greater control over reservation agency affairs. They could withhold rations or other supplies from

Indians who they perceived as unwilling to work (Fowler 2001). Agents discouraged group cooperative labor and “pressured allottees to live on their allotments, apart from their extended family clusters or bands” (Fowler 2001:284). The government required that agency superintendents manage income Indians received, and supervised their spending. If agents believed rations were being shared among allottees, they were often reduced (Fowler 2001). In 1878, Congress authorized the creation and organization of the Indian Police. These agents were expected to enforce assimilation policy and “returned truants to government schools, helped to quash dances and curing ceremonies, reported cases of polygamy, gambling, and wearing traditional hair and clothing styles. Violations of regulations could be punished by loss of rations and other supplies or by incarceration” (Fowler 2001:286).

At the time of the Dawes Act, many Indian tribes still practiced communal land stewardship, and their cultural, religious, and family structure revolved around communal ownership. Therefore, allotment was a powerful means of attempting to forcibly alter the social and economic relationships of an already isolated and disenfranchised people. (Norris et al. 2014:27)

The Great Sioux Agreement of 1889 separated the Lakota into reservations around the major agencies at Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River and Standing Rock (Fowler 2001). As stated by the Secretary of Interior, John Noble in 1889,

The breaking up of this great nation of Indians into smaller parts and segregating...separate reservations for each of said parts marks a long step toward the disintegration of their tribal life and will help them forward to...civilized habits. (Michaels 1890:339)

As Deloria (1969) explains, land-taking and missionizing went hand-in-hand during this time. The government and religious organizations united to build churches and schools, and together enforced bans on, among other things, traditional and religious practices (La Vere 2004). Thus, Christian religious organizations and missionaries “strongly supported the Dawes Allotment Act as the best means available of Christianizing the tribes” (Deloria 1969:47). A

deteriorating sense of spiritual identity resulted as spurred by missionaries' demonizing of Native traditions, and increasing conditions of hunger, poverty and hopelessness in reservation communities. Christian missionaries' "wholesale dismissal of the value of virtually every aspect of Indian culture has reaped a grim harvest of disorientation, dislocation, and violence" (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995:205).

2.2.2 Indian Boarding Schools

The government's practice of sending Indian children to boarding schools also began in the late 19th century, and continued until as late as the 1970s. Education was central to assimilation policy," explains Fowler (2001:288). It was exemplified in the boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania founded by Richard Pratt in 1879 who uttered the famous words that, through the boarding schools, Euro-American educators could "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man" (Pratt 1892:para 1). School attendance was enforced by reservation agents, the Indian Police and the Courts of Indian Offenses (Hoxie 1979). Officials convinced Native American parents that sending their children to missionary-operated boarding schools would benefit these children to best function in dominant society. By the early 1900s, according to Hoxie, "It was almost impossible for a family to avoid sending its children away for an education, the principal goal of which was to separate the children from their traditions and past" (1979:59).

Post-Civil War federal Indian-education policy was increasingly taken over by Christian missionaries tasked to "civilize" the "savage," Christianize the "heathen," and rescue the "godless" by educating Indian children in the ways of Anglo-American religion, culture, technology, and lifeways (Harvard Project 2008:200). Rather than being taught academics, the boarding schools emphasized vocation by teaching students trades, farming and domestic work,

often forcing them to do heavy labor within the school or in the school fields (Fowler 2001). Upon entering the school, Native American students were given an English name, including the surname of their fathers (Fowler 2001). All of this contributed to the degradation of Native American institutions, family and social cohesion. With banned traditional and religious practices, the boarding schools were another arm of what Hall and Fenelon (2009) refer to as anti-traditional strategies designed to assimilate Indians through the destruction of their social and traditional life, and erasure of their culture. The aim of the Indian boarding school was forced acculturation targeted towards the most vulnerable members of tribal communities, children (Harvard Project 2008). Thus, Native American children were removed from their homes and placed in far-away boarding schools where they could be taught “civilization.” In large numbers, Native American children were taken, often forcefully, from their families, forbidden to speak their language or engage in traditional practices, were groomed and dressed in the Euro-American way, and were often subjected to physical and sexual abuse. The widespread sexual abuse that occurred throughout the history of the Indian boarding schools has been under investigation in cases as recent as the late 1980s (Mankiller 1993).

As Wilma Mankiller states, the goal of the boarding schools was to “acculturate Native people into the mainstream white society and, at the same time destroy their sense of self” (1993:8). The primary mission of the boarding schools, she furthers, “was for the children to leave everything behind that related to their native culture, heritage, history, and language. In short, there was a full-scale attempt at deracination – the uprooting or destruction of a race and its culture (Mankiller 1993:8). As argued by Berman (2004), the aim of the Indian boarding schools was to re-socialize Indian children to non-Indian ways of life. Taught by Christian missionaries that their peoples’ traditions and their ways of knowing taught to them by respected

family members were evil, Indian children returned to the reservation as deeply damaged and confused individuals who experienced cultural shame, and deep mental, emotional and physical wounds (Oyate Omniciye 2012). As explained by St. Pierre and Long Soldier, “Separated from family for most of their childhood, these children were raised in military-style boarding schools. This educational system systematically destroyed Indian parenting patterns, slowly squeezing the life out of the traditional Indian attitude toward extended family” (1995:203). By forcing Native American children to relinquish their Native identities, their languages, cultures, customs and families, Indian education policy in the US was aimed at what Hall and Fenelon (2009) refer to as “culturicidal domination.”

2.2.3 Banned Religious Practice

As part of the 1890s policies of Indian subordination, banning religious practices was another anti-traditional strategy enacted by the U.S. government in the effort to dismantle tribal social cohesion (Hall and Fenelon 2009). Further, federal policies against “giveaways” and other social and cultural practices, took aim at aboriginal kinship and traditional practices of reciprocity (La Vere 2004). Speaking of the Sechelt peoples of Canada – whose experience with culturicide, boarding schools, and assaults on identity and culture are remarkably similar to those in the United States – Gillian Weiss explains,

The residential [boarding] school had a profound effect on the Sechelt people for 70 years. Many older people have bitter memories of it, and currently it is the major scapegoat for the loss of traditional culture and lifestyle and the destruction of the Sechelt identity. (2000:24)

With these attacks on identity and tradition to blame for much of the loss of traditional culture, lifestyle, and Native identity, and as policies from which today’s Native youth are only two to three generations removed, this “historical trauma” plays a huge role in the presence of persistent

intergenerational poverty (Oyate Omniciye 2012). Cultural healing is thus one of the major arms of Native American self-determination efforts today, including the-relearning of Native culture.

2.2.4 Indian Citizenship Act, the Merriam Report and the Indian Reorganization Act

In 1924, Congress granted citizenship to all Indians “born within the territorial limits of the United States” in the Indian Citizenship Act (Mankiller 1993:173). In large part, according to Fowler (2001), this was in response to pressure from groups sympathetic to the contributions of Native Americans in World War I. According to Holm,

It was not until the government, or at least the country’s lawmakers, became fully imbued with the idea that individual liberty could be subordinate to the public welfare or to national security and able to place controls on the white population, that American Indian citizenship became justifiable to most whites. (1981:151)

Indians were still exempt from the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the United States. Many states still refused to recognize Native American voting rights and often prevented them from testifying in court or taking part in jury duty (Mankiller 1993). Further, the federal government

subsequently continued to act as trustee and to exercise control over Indian land and income from that land. Indians were ‘protected’ from exploitation by limitations on their freedoms, on the one hand, and their resources were transferred to non-Indians considered more qualified to use them on the other. (Fowler 2001:290)

In 1928, the Institute for Government Research (now the Brookings Institute), published *The Problem of Indian Administration*, known as the Merriam Report (Harvard Project 2008). This report detailed the conditions on Indian reservations throughout the country and exposed the failure of Allotment and other U.S. policies. The report revealed the degree of Indian land-loss due to allotment, and the poverty, and social and cultural decay experienced by Native Americans on reservations (Rosier 2004). Guided by the appalling results of the report, the new Bureau of Indian Affairs commissioner, John Collier began the implementation of the next phase of U.S. government dealings with Native American peoples within the Howard-Wheeler, or the

Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934 (Iverson 1985). Far more sensitive to Indian issues than previous officials within the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the U.S. Department of Interior and other government offices, Collier ushered in an imperfect, yet transformative era of U.S.-Indian relations within which he was determined to bring President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal to Native American communities in an "Indian New Deal" (Mankiller 1993; Iverson 1985). As prescribed by the Merriam Report, the policy of allotment was eliminated. Guided by a belief in the importance of Indian self-determination, Collier embraced traditional Indian culture and called for a stop to efforts of assimilation and extermination (Rosier 2004). Under the IRA, tribal governments were formally organized and recognized (Deloria 1999). Thus, tribal governments, councils and other organizational mechanisms protected tribes from further government and white encroachment onto Native American lands and lives (Rosier 2004). Under the IRA, political power was centralized in the hands of the tribal council that acted as an intermediary between the tribe and the federal government trustee (Harvard Project 2008). There were also efforts during this time to develop reservation lands and initiate work relief programs (Shepherd 2004).

While criticized as paternalistic, the Merriam Report and the ensuing IRA policies pushed for by Collier called for "more understanding of and sympathy for the Indian point of view," and acknowledged that "Indians have much to contribute to the dominant civilization" (Harvard Project 2008:4). Collier's emphasis on restoring aboriginal lands, traditions, language and religion, was a drastic, if only temporary, change in the U.S. government's views of and policies toward Native American peoples (Iverson 1985). It was an unusual and unprecedented acknowledgement of government-sanctioned and directed wrongdoings toward Native Americans that would not be offered again for over 40 years. Through the IRA, as stated by

Mankiller, “For the first time in memory, the white government grudgingly acknowledged that native people had not been allowed any real voice in the control of their own destiny” (Mankiller 1993:174).

2.2.5 World War II, Termination and Relocation

Native Americans took part in large numbers in World War II. However, despite their perceived equality on the battlefield, many returned home to the racism, marginalization, discrimination and poverty that characterized their pre-war realities (St. Pierre and Long Soldier 1995). Indians’ participation in the war effort was often perceived by whites as unquestioned loyalty to the United States which thereby unintentionally helped to encourage the next phase of U.S.-Native American relations, *termination* (Holm 1981). Post-World War II policies toward Native Nations were characterized by efforts to eliminate tribes’ unique legal status in relation to the U.S. government, and to thereby end U.S. government treaty obligations toward Native peoples through policies of termination.

In 1946, Native peoples who lost their land through fraudulent dealings with other Americans were given the opportunity to reclaim it through the Indian Claims Commission (ICC). The ICC created an official means for some tribes to seek settlements for land loss and treaty violations (Harvard Project 2008). At the same time, it was a government effort to lay the groundwork to soon “withdraw from the Indian Business” (Iverson 1985:164). In 1953, Congress passed the Termination Act which was designed to end tribes’ status as distinct political entities and thereby to eliminate the wardship and trust relationships and responsibilities of the U.S. government toward Native nations (Berman 2004). This phase of U.S.-Native American relations, presented in the guise of Native American “emancipation,” was devastating for many

tribes (Holm 1981). It was intended to ultimately eliminate tribal sovereignty by redefining the political relationship between tribes and the federal government. “Terminated” tribes lost federal recognition, tribal governments lost jurisdiction, tribal communities lost federal funding, and tribal members lost their eligibility for annuities granted under federal trusteeship (Harvard Project 2008). No longer qualifying for federal assistance including annuities, housing subsidies, and commodity foods, the already desperate conditions of reservation Indians worsened (Berman 2004). Many Native American leaders recognized that the termination policies were further intended to “break up native communities and put tribal land on the market by abolishing its status as nontaxable trust land,” leading to more land loss and further loss of control (Mankiller 1993:68). Further, termination meant “the imposition of state civil and criminal authority and the loss of state tax exemption and special tribal programs” (Mankiller 1993:68).

Closely tied to the policy of termination was the American Indian Relocation and Vocational Assistance Act, or Relocation Act of 1955. Another part of the effort to eliminate federal services to tribal members, the relocation program sought to remove Indians from their reservations so as to end their eligibility for government annuities as reservation tribal members (Berman 2004). Encouraged to relocate to urban areas like San Francisco, Denver and Minneapolis, reservation Indians were coaxed by promises of jobs, housing assistance and other incentives. According to Wilma Mankiller, relocation gave the government “the perfect chance to take Indian people away from their culture and their land” (Mankiller 1993:69). War-time employment opportunities did exist, and Native Americans were encouraged to pursue an urban life like that of non-Indians (Johnson, Champagne and Nagel 1997). Relocation, however, went hand-in-hand with termination and, like termination was another failed U.S. government-directed strategy towards assimilation. While designed to break up the tribes, what Native peoples often

discovered in the cities were other relocated Native peoples with whom they experienced a resurgence of traditional gatherings (Fortunate Eagle 1971). “Working together, we were able to help maintain a stable Indian community within the larger urban context. Each affiliated group maintained its own identity and conducted its own programs while, at the same time, exercising its voice in formulating larger community objectives” (Fortunate Eagle 1971:55). In 1990, more than 50% of American Indians lived in cities (Johnson et al. 1997).

U.S. government policies toward American Indians, specifically here, the Lakota, since the mid-19th century were enforced policies towards Native American dependency (Berman 2004). As Berman explains,

First by punishing Indians who refused to comply with ration programs (by forcing resettlement onto reservation encampments), then by taking away compensation for tribal lands (per capita payments) to pay for the rationed goods. Finally, government coercion tactics exacerbated tribal factions by playing “settled” Indians against their “unsettled” cousins. (2004:141)

What has emerged, Berman argues, has been a structurally inherent and deliberate “cycle of dependency designed to confuse and control its subjects” (Berman 2004:141). Berman further argues that, “since the end of treaty making, federal policy has been guided by the social rearrangement of native communities – from reservations to relocation and job training programs” (Berman 2004:139).

Social and economic conditions in much of Indian Country today reflect the failure of U.S. government policies toward Native peoples. In Pine Ridge, a community characterized by high rates of unemployment, alcohol and drug use, and suicide events, re-development efforts are often aimed at what is viewed as social and cultural healing through the restoration of cultural traditions, social cohesion, family health, and tribal identity – resulting in ethnic pride. Centuries of cultural suppression, marginalization, disenfranchisement and policies that, according to the

Harvard Project, “left tribes dependent on a paternalistic federal government” meant that, by the middle of the 20th century, tribes were not in control (Harvard Project 2008:9).

The reservation system, from its establishment, Iverson (1985) argues, was believed by many as only a temporary institution that soon, with its inhabitants, would be absorbed into and controlled by mainstream America. Combined with persistent policies of assimilation and a constantly receding land base, the impacts on Native peoples were devastating. However, while expected to lead to the elimination of the Sioux Nation, “Lakota culture survived the programs designed to kill it” (Hoxie 1979:58). Native American men were not transformed to white men, the old ways, while highly endangered, were not destroyed, and reservations and Native peoples and culture survived. These policies “failed to achieve the complete ‘disintegration’ of tribal life. And the supreme irony: the reservations forced on the tribes did not become vehicles for ‘civilizing’ and assimilating them; instead they became cultural homelands, places where a native identity could be maintained and passed on to new generations” (Hoxie 1979:58). Perhaps, for the Lakota, this is due to having maintained land that, while highly receded and fragmented, still held traditional and spiritual significances in that it held much of their history, the remains of their ancestors, and places of reverence. An example is the site of the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre (Van Horn et al. 1996). The Pine Ridge (and other Lakota Sioux Reservations) were therefore still intrinsically tied to the peoples’ collective memories. Robert Rundstrom explains that geographers tend to agree that “place” consists of four elements: (1) physical site and situation, (2) a tangible created environment, (3) a social milieu, and (4) a set of personal and shared meanings that “interpenetrate and form an indivisible whole, a context or arena reciprocally shaping and shaped by the social and political will” (Rundstrom 1997:187).

Having retained some shared sense of “place” may be one reason that Lakota culture survived the constant affronts against it and that the reservation became, for the Lakota, a cultural refuge.

2.3 Tribal Economic Development

2.3.1 Tribal Economic Development – Introduction

Economic underdevelopment and poverty are persistent concerns within Native American communities. In comparison to the average American, in terms of socioeconomics, Native Americans have lower incomes, hold far less personal wealth in terms of home ownership and quality, face higher unemployment, greater family disintegration, and higher death rates from, for example, certain mental health and chronic diseases (Harvard Project 2008). A 1997 study by the Harvard School of Public Health found “the life expectancy of Lakota men and women living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to be the lowest in the US and the lowest in the western hemisphere except for Haitians” (Norris et. al 2014:4). Reservation Indians are five times more likely than average Americans to die from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, and the death rate for Indians from diabetes is four times greater than for the U.S. population as a whole (Harvard Project 2008). Illicit drug use among Native American teens is twice that of the average U.S. teenager and tobacco use is also substantially higher (Harvard Project 2008). The rate of teenage pregnancy among Native Americans is nearly twice that of the U.S. population as a whole, while Native American mothers are significantly less likely to receive prenatal care (Harvard Project 2008). Reservation Indians are nearly twice as likely to be on public assistance than the average population, and the percentage of Native American adults with college degrees is less than half that of the general U.S. adult population (Harvard Project 2008).

The reservation in which we live is a place of extreme poverty. Shannon County, which encompasses the majority of the [Pine Ridge] reservation land, is the second-poorest

county in the entire United States, with a per capita annual income of just \$6,236. Eighty percent of reservation residents are unemployed (compared to 8.2% for the rest of the country, in the midst of one of the worst recessions of modern history). Half of our neighbors live below the federal poverty level, including 61% of children under the age of eighteen...Being a child growing up on the reservation is hard. It seems that drugs, alcoholism, violence, broken families, and gangs are everywhere you look. In recent years, an epidemic of youth suicides has gripped this already-troubled community. Local organizations that deal with young people must work hard to give our boys and girls a sense of self-worth, individual and cultural pride, and hope that things can and will get better in the future. (<http://www.thundervalley.org/projects/lakota-immersion-childcare-iyapi-glukinipi/>)

Concerns over economic development are high in reservation communities. Economic and associated social conditions as described above have persisted through much of the last century and, as explained by the Harvard Project, “have lain behind and filtered through a broader array of challenges and problems that have made life difficult for generations of citizens of Native nations (Harvard Project 2008:111).

2.3.2 Reservation Economic “Development” and Neocolonialism

Overall, U.S. government policies toward Native Americans – from treaty-making, to religious missions, land allotment, to termination and Indian boarding schools – have had the same underlying goal of assimilation through cultural degradation and land loss. With this precedence, it is no wonder that “development” projects in Native American communities, when presented by Euro-Americans, are often met with apprehension. This apprehension is furthered by acknowledgements that federal government-directed initiatives for economic development have done more to create conditions of poverty and cultural degradation than to alleviate them (O’Neill 2004). Development projects, however well-intentioned, became the more gentle means of imposing Western worldviews on other cultures and have thus represented a continued pressure on indigenous peoples to compromise further sovereignty (Tinker 2004). The development paradigms designed and implemented for the past 40 years have, as George Tinker

(2004) argues, more often resulted in “mal-development.” Continuing the efforts of assimilation, many of these projects have furthered the effort to impose an economic system inherently opposed to Native American values and culture. Native communities’ emphases on the community versus the individual, and on generosity and reciprocity, contradict Western capitalist economics within which individual and personal gain are encouraged as essential to economic health. The result has been the imposition of culturally insensitive and irrelevant economic initiatives in Indian Country that ultimately failed. O’Neill refers to this as a legacy of colonial exploitation (2004). This legacy has led to similar conditions of poverty and marginalization that characterize indigenous communities in the global South (i.e. Central and South America, South Asia, Africa, and other areas with a history of European colonialism).

Beginning in the 1960s, myriad white-designed and directed efforts toward “development” of reservation communities were instituted by the U.S. government as well as various non-governmental and religious organizations. According to the Harvard Project (2008), from the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, the federal government took a project-based approach to Indian economic development. In the 1960s, in accordance with a congressional mandate, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the Department of Commerce was granted funding for physical investments associated with specific projects, such as a building for a manufacturing facility or the launching of a tribal motel, so as “to generate jobs, help retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in economically distressed areas of the US. Other agencies adopted similar project-oriented approaches, with none addressing the fundamental causes of economic underdevelopment” (Harvard Project 2008:113).

As Duane Champagne states, “most reservation communities prefer relatively holistic institutional relations among economy, community, polity, and culture” (Champagne 2004:321), and thus development efforts as directed from the outside have been culturally irrelevant in the Native, and specifically here, the Oglala Lakota contexts. In a process similar to earlier assimilationist efforts, Kottak points out that when development projects attempt to replace Native forms with culturally alien property concepts and productive units, they fail (Kottak 1999:26). Inherent within the Western development paradigm is an interventionist strategy that disregards cultural variation, sovereignty, and the community’s perception of its legitimacy (Kottak 1999). Thus, in the name of “development,” the Western-guided process has radically intensified meddling in the affairs of the poor (Finan 2002).

The push for Western-guided development within indigenous and Third World communities is perceived as neo-colonialism. As argued by Tinker,

In the modern context of unrelenting Euro-American conquest and colonization, American Indians have suffered significantly high levels of social disturbance and mental health dysfunction, from chronic, community-wide levels of depression to widespread alcoholism, high rates of teen suicide, serious alienation from the Euro-American culture of work and achievement, and an ongoing colonization of our minds. One result of this process is a pervasive codependency with our colonizer. (Tinker 2004:69)

Alice Kehoe adds that, “[Native Americans’] economic condition resulted from invasions, epidemics, international monopolies profiting from colonialism, railroad politics, world markets – the structure of Western capitalism as it emerged through four hundred years (Kehoe 1989:153).

Indigenous peoples’ colonial experiences throughout the world, but particularly in the Americas, have been remarkably similar in terms of cultural genocide, attempted extermination, forced assimilation, repression, economic under-development, and marginality among many indigenous communities in the United States, Canada, and throughout Central and South

America. Indigenous peoples, Bodley explains, “are victimized because they control resources that outsiders demand” (2008:178). “Historically, in case after case government programs seemingly intended for the progress of indigenous peoples directly or indirectly forced culture change, and these programs in turn were linked invariably to the extraction of indigenous peoples’ resources to benefit the national economy” (Bodley 2008:18). Bodley further explains that, for indigenous peoples, participation in the global market economy “has often been brought about by government-supported compulsion, persuasion, and deliberately altered circumstances (Bodley 2008:142).

Indigenous peoples may feel deprivation not only when the economic goals they have been encouraged to seek fail to materialize, but also when they discover that they are powerless second-class citizens who are discriminated against and exploited by the dominant society. At the same time, they are denied the satisfaction of cultural autonomy when it has been lost in the process of globalization. (Bodley 2008:181)

In recent decades, however, many governments’ policies toward indigenous peoples have shifted their focus from assimilation to self-determination. Recognizing that former government-directed attempts at economic development within Indian Country and other indigenous communities, have lowered the standard of living, not raised it (Bodley 2008), indigenous peoples are designing development programs using their definitions of “development” guided by traditional worldviews.

Until recently, modernization theory dominated American and European notions of progress and development. This understanding puts economic gain at the forefront and capitalist enterprise as both natural and good for the people. Modernization theory, according to O’Neill has “shaped the foundation of Indian policy from the development of the first boarding schools and reservation land allotments to the Indian New Deal and Termination” (2004:5). Arturo Escobar and other development theorists working in Latin America point out how, particularly in areas affected by colonialism, imposed notions of progress have, as with the Lakota and other

Native American communities, resulted in dependency. Incorporation into the U.S. political economy, O'Neill (2004) explains, has been the problem, not the solution to desperate economic conditions on Indian reservations. In contrast to the prevailing certainty of the good of capitalist enterprises, many non-Western cultures have values and institutions that are inherently incompatible with that notion (Champagne 2004). Champagne, in pointing out the general absence of a significant private entrepreneurial sector in many reservation communities, notes that this absence is not an accident, as individual capitalist activity, accumulation of wealth, and a focus on production and market enterprise are not supported in most reservation communities (Champagne 2004). More important values there continue to be the values of generosity, redistribution and egalitarianism (Champagne 2004). In contrast to the development paradigm, and that has further complicated efforts of development directed at indigenous communities, is indigenous peoples' "ability...to find satisfaction at relatively low and stable consumption levels (Bodley 2008:146).

Escobar argues that the "discourse of development," as has developed in post-World War II American and Western European dealings with "underdeveloped" nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, resulted in countries being subjected to "increasingly systematic, detailed, and comprehensive interventions" by the West (1995:6). Guided by Western notions of "development" and "progress," Western-led development efforts in Third World nations have been implemented and judged against Western standards. They have paid little attention to local understandings, perceptions and definitions of wealth and development (let alone their assessment of their status as "underdeveloped"). Similarly, on U.S. Indian reservations, including Pine Ridge, as with other indigenous communities in the Americas, reservation "development" efforts were, until recently, designed from the Western capitalist perspective, with little

recognition or understanding of Native American realities, needs or wants. These efforts reflected “another perpetuation of the hegemonic idea of the West’s [or here, Euro-Americans’] superiority” (Escobar 1995:8).

Escobar highlights Homi Bhabha’s definition of colonial discourse emphasizing Bhabha’s point that “...The objective colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction...I am referring to a form of governmentality that in marking out a “subject nation,” appropriates, directs and dominates its various spheres of activity” (Escobar 1995:9). “Administrative conquest” in the reservation context, argues Thomas Biolsi (1995), was one of the last colonial controls government agents were able to exercise over reservation Indians in order to completely pacify them. By establishing such control, the government was able to “know” the Indian and thereby to “construct new subjects” (Biolsi 1995:29). Using Michel Foucault’s theories on “subjection,” Biolsi argues that, because of the Native emphasis on the community (in contrast to the Western emphasis on the individual – in keeping with American capitalism), the reservation came to be used as an administrative space through which individuals could be created and, with their creation, over whom officials could exercise greater control (Biolsi 1995).

Escobar’s “discourse on development” emphasizes the West’s hegemonic understandings of Third World problems as having only Western-guided solutions (1995). While this tendency is viewable in the ways in which non-Indian designed development efforts have taken place in Indian Country, it misses one element that, for George Tinker, distinguishes the Third World experience from that of the indigenous, or “Fourth World.” Tinker, while stating that indigenous peoples share with the Third World “the hunger, poverty, repression, and oppression that have

been the continuing common experience of those overpowered by the expansionism of European adventurers and their missionaries 500 years ago” (2004:100), the “Fourth World,” in contrast, carries,

... The particular repercussions of conquest and genocide as they affected our distinctive indigenous cultures. While the immediately obvious effects of conquest and genocide seem similar for Third and Fourth World peoples – poverty, unemployment, disease, high infant mortality, low adult longevity – there are deeper, more hidden, but no less deadly effects of colonialism that affect Third and Fourth World peoples in dramatically different ways. These effects are especially felt in the indigenous Fourth World spiritual experience, and we see our struggle for liberation within the context of this distinctive spirituality. (Tinker 2004:100)

2.3.3 Indigenous Development

Noting how Western-guided development strategies have tended to fail in terms of meeting their poverty-alleviating objectives, Tara Ruttenberg (2013) and Severine Deneulin (2012) describe indigenous development movements that are taking place in Latin America. There, economic alternatives of indigenous design are being implemented, both in resistance to Western capitalism and “development,” and as an expression of self-determination and cultural revitalization. Their alternative, called well-being economics is guided by the notion of *buen vivir* – or, loosely translated, living well. It is similarly reflected in American Indian economic and community development, and cultural revitalization initiatives today. As an alternative to Western capitalism and neo-liberalism (which is promoted within Western capitalism as the mechanism for global trade and investment that, it is argued, allows for all nations to prosper and develop equally (<http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism>), well-being economics is a post-neoliberal policy framework that empowers local communities to address their respective local needs and concerns in unique but relevant ways, not prescribed from the outside. It uses a different measure of happiness than the gross domestic product and seeks to

expand people's possibilities in satisfying their needs (Ruttenberg 2013). Buen vivir is an indigenous concept that characterizes indigenous-led social movements, specifically in Bolivia and Ecuador. There, indigenous communities are articulating the concept and practice of well-being economics in ways that contrast sharply to prevailing economic development theory and initiative (Ruttenberg 2013). Their human-centered development strategies are locally defined, community-level efforts that aim to incorporate the subjective nature of well-being and well-being needs of citizens (Ruttenberg 2013). Pointing to various studies that have revealed a disconnect between wealth and happiness, buen vivir seeks to highlight alternatives to Western-style development and is a response to the mono-cultural, capitalist, Western development model. It seeks a redistribution of wealth and power, an understanding of happiness as not necessarily related to material wealth and consumption, a sustainable relationship between the economy and the environment, and respect both for one-another and for Mother Earth (Ruttenberg 2013). Buen vivir thus incorporates what Tinker (2004) argues are indigenous ethics of generosity and reciprocity as they are found in Indian communities. It bears remarkable resemblance to the guiding principles of development among the Oglala Lakota in their newly adopted, and recently signed into Lakota tribal law, *Oyate Omniciye* (2012) as discussed in Chapter 1 and further detailed in Chapter 3.

Indigenous peoples in Bolivia and Ecuador have used the concept of buen vivir to propose alternative development paradigms to the Western model of industrialization and "modernization." Bolivia has incorporated buen vivir concepts and goals into its constitution, and Ecuador, using the related Quechua concept of *Sumak Kawsay*, outlined specific policy objectives to achieve buen vivir in their 2009-2013 Buen Vivir Development plan. As "a synthesis of indigenous cultural wisdom and Western concepts of modernity, moving away from

the mantra of progress and wealth accumulation, toward a more holistic, meaningful and practical existence of living in harmony with one another and with the natural environment through cooperation and community solidarity” (Ruttenberg 2013:81), well-being economics promotes equality through social and territorial redistribution of the benefits of development (Ruttenberg 2013). Buen vivir acknowledges and seeks to address the powers of domination and exploitation inherent in the Western development model as exercised through Western capitalism and globalization (Ruttenberg 2013).

The well-being economics espoused by Latin American indigenous groups emphasizes a number of concepts that are consistent with indigenous worldviews in North America, including those of the Oglala Lakota. Among those worldviews are an understanding of “progress” as not following a linear trajectory, per se, but rather as a constantly changing process (Deneulin 2012). An indigenous worldview also tends to see humans as a part of nature, though neither above nor dominant over it. Living with dignity, living in harmony with one’s community, fulfilment of human rights, relationships of service and reciprocity towards one another and towards nature, and the integration of the material and spiritual dimensions of life are elements of the indigenous worldview that characterize many indigenous economic strategies (Deneulin 2012). Buen vivir also recognizes context and acknowledges that what works for one community may not work the same for another (Ruttenberg 2013). Because it is context-specific, buen vivir proponents recognize and prize diversity in culture, language, history, and social, political and ecological life (Deneulin 2012). Buen vivir supports community solidarity, and looks for alternatives to resource exploitation that is harmful to both the environment and its inhabitants. Its goals are ambitious in terms of education, reducing illiteracy, achieving social equality, democratic representation, community health, and freedom. However, like Native American economic

development efforts today, it represents a critical shift from what have been paternalistic and hegemonic strategies employed by the United States and the West in its emphasis on indigenous assimilation, toward indigenous self-determination.

2.3.4 Tribal Development

Tribal “development” today emphasizes self-determination and tribal sovereignty. This shift symbolically acknowledges that U.S. policies of assimilation have done more to exacerbate Native American communities’ circumstances of poverty and dependence than to allow for Native Americans’ economic self-sufficiency.

To understand what economic development means from the Native American perspective, one must understand the holistic nature of Native American culture. Rather than delineating between social, political, economic, cultural and religious components of society, Native Americans and other indigenous peoples tend to view these not simply as separate components within the societal machine, but as interdependent and interrelated (Champagne 2004). As such, as Duane Champagne (2004) argues, for most Native American communities, economic development is a means to an end (2004:311). It is a way to support the community, to promote self-sufficiency, to provide employment and opportunity so as to keep tribal members on the reservation, and to preserve and enhance Native American culture (Champagne 2004). This kind of economic development may provide the ability to sustain communities where citizens want to live (Harvard Project 2008). However, without freedom from economic dependence, sovereignty can be neither guaranteed nor entirely achieved (Champagne 2004). What is important in the Native American context is that development is guided by traditional and cultural values and intended for the community good. Tinker argues that notions of

development predicate a shift toward Western models of linear progress from traditional indigenous worldviews and notions of balance and the common good (Tinker 2004). What seems to be happening today, however, as pointed out by Champagne, is that Native American communities are choosing a form of collective rather than individual capitalism (Champagne 2004). Like their indigenous counterparts in Latin America, Native American communities are thus pursuing a well-being economic system within which is embodied a Native American/indigenous worldview. What Champagne (2004) calls “tribal capitalism” can be seen in economic development efforts throughout Native American reservation communities. Noting how many non-Western cultures’ values and institutions are incompatible with capitalist enterprise, Champagne reminds us that “communities can take on capitalist elements and participate in capitalist markets and still retain core aspects of identity, tradition, institutional relations – the close interconnectedness of policy, culture, economy, and community – and cultural values” (Champagne 2004:310). Thus, tribal capitalism involves alternative participation in development and capitalism as it is being expressed in the Native American context (Champagne 2004). Champagne explains that,

Although the specific features, ceremonies, and stories of Native religions and worldviews vary considerably, Native communities tend to share similar holistic understandings of the cosmos; thus tribal capitalism rather than individual entrepreneurship embodies Native cultural understandings and preferences. (Champagne 2004:324)

2.3.5 Tribal Sovereignty

The social advantages of progress – as defined in terms of increased incomes, higher standards of living, greater security, and better health – are thought to be positive, universal goods to be obtained at any price. Although one might argue that Indigenous peoples should not be forced to sacrifice their own cultures and autonomy to obtain these benefits, government planners historically felt that the loss of cultural autonomy would be a small price to pay for such obvious advantages. (Bodley 2008:167)

Sovereignty is an essential component of economic development in Indian Country today. It is also the best means of ensuring the success of Native American economic development endeavors (Harvard Project 2008). Control over tribal assets, explains Sherry Salway Black, an Oglala Lakota and Board Member of the First Nations Development Institute, means control over Native nations' social and economic progress, community and cultural healing, and the peoples' empowerment (Harvard Project 2008). Native American communities face challenges to their sovereignty from local, state and federal governments even today (Champagne 2004). To ensure sovereignty, economic development must be accompanied by the strengthening of tribal governments so as to meet these challenges, preserve and extend culture and traditions, and control political, cultural and social futures while participating (if they choose) in the global economy (Champagne 2004).

In the 1960s, Melvin Thom, a Paiute Indian from Walker River in Nevada, and the cofounder and president of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), realized that it was essential that Indian people, Indian tribes, and Indian sovereign rights not be compromised in the search for solutions to alleviating the poverty, unemployment, and degrading lifestyles experienced by urban and reservation Indians (Johnson et al. 1997). He emphasized the importance of Native American identity and the resilience of Native culture, and he "understood that family, tribalism, and sovereignty had sustained Indian people through the many government programs designed to destroy them as a people and to nationalize their traditional lands" (Johnson et al. 1997:14). In contrast to the neo-liberal system, "development" in the indigenous context demonstrates an egalitarian approach to economics and progress that redirects power from the political, corporate and financial elites. As stated by Henry Giroux,

Both neo-liberal-driven governments and authoritarian societies share one important factor: they care more about consolidating power in the hands of the political, corporate

and financial elite than they do about investing in the future of young people and expanding the benefits of the social contract and common good. (2015:3rd para)

Indigenous peoples, argue Hall and Fenalon (2009), by their mere (continued) existence present a political and ideological threat to the dominant neoliberal capitalist system. Their notions of “progress” and “development” are fundamentally at-odds with and thus a challenge to, the dominant system (Hall and Fenalon 2009).

Struggles over sovereignty have been, like colonization, similar for indigenous peoples in the Americas and Canada (Hall and Fenalon 2009). In a variety of tribal contexts, however, research has shown that “successful economic development is most likely to occur when tribes effectively assert their sovereignty and back up such assertions with capable and culturally appropriate institutions of self-government” (Harvard Project 2008:121). As explained by Champagne (2004), Native American communities view their tribal governments as the tribe’s protectors of their long-term cultural and political interests (Champagne 2004). Thus, Native American communities expect their tribal governments to “preserve the political sovereignty of the Native communities, as well as to protect and promote cultural values and community survival” (Champagne 2004:322). It is within this expectation that economic development will ultimately support cultural preservation and enhancement, that economic development initiatives are supported by tribal communities (Champagne 2004). Sound governments, as pointed out by the Harvard Project (2008), are essential to building strong economies and societies.

Tribes with capable institutions of governance – institutions that operate within a set of culturally legitimate checks and balances – realize benefits such as increased employment, rising incomes, and community revitalization. Research from the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development demonstrates that carefully crafted institutions of governance are as important for economic and social development as access to markets, natural resources, and human talent. (Harvard Project 2008:24)

However, as further explained by the Harvard Project (2008), with effective governing institutions, social and cultural institutions are also important to community health and stability.

Examples range from family structures and religion to health-care and civil-society organizations. Social and cultural institutions impact the incentives of individuals and enterprises to invest their lives and “resources in one community rather than another” (Harvard Project 2008:122). Thus, economic development is promoted by making the community a place where tribal members want to stay to live because “social and cultural institutions make contributing to the building and stabilization of the community gratifying” (Harvard Project 2008:122).

As I attempted to show in Chapter 1, historical struggles drive economic and social inequalities (Blim 2005). As stated by Hall and Fenalon,

Struggles over sovereignty and autonomy are important conflict points for indigenous peoples to work out their continuing relationships with the dominant states in which they reside. Historical settlements and documents, especially treaties made with colonial and contemporary governments, deeply influence relations with current political systems. (Hall and Fenalon 2009:36)

Neo-liberal solutions to economic development efforts in Indian Country repeatedly failed and often worsened the social and economic conditions they aimed to address. Thus, what seems to have become clear is that, whatever their motive, economic development initiatives, when introduced from outside the community and culture to which they are directed, will fail. Development that has been designed and implemented through the same lens that pushed endlessly for assimilation, are seen as just that – assimilation efforts in yet another new guise – designed from a different cultural perspective and to be put into action in a community of whom the development designers have little understanding. “States must recognize indigenous peoples’ own normative systems,” argues Blim (2005). Then, with social inclusion, political equality and justice within their own parameters of sovereignty, and mutual recognition and respect for those parameters, development initiatives can be successful.

Johnson et al. (1997) point to two significant events that had a strong impact on the development of policies of Indian self-determination during the administration of President

Richard Nixon. First Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.'s 1969 study of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, *The American Indian and the Bureau of Indian Affairs*, criticized the federal government and specifically the BIA for its inept handling of Indian affairs, including the failure of the government's Indian education policy, and the high rates of unemployment, disease, and death on Indian reservations as a result of neglect of Indian people by the federal government (Johnson et al. 1997). The other significant event that influenced Indian policy during the Nixon administration was the 1969 publication of *Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America*, by Edgar S. Cahn. This study further exposed the ineptitude of the BIA in carrying out its responsibilities toward Native Americans (Johnson et al. 1997). In 1975, congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. This legislation marked a significant shift in federal recognition of and relations with tribal governments, and gave Native American governments control over services and programs previously controlled by the federal government (Harvard Project 2008). Tribal governments were thereby allowed to function in support of tribally-controlled and directed economic development and community change. This change meant empowering tribes to consider local circumstances, desires, preferences, needs and ways of doing things (Harvard Project 2008).

“Sovereignty as an idea and self-determination and self-governance as federal policies place resources squarely in the hands of Native officials and citizens” (Harvard Project 2008:127). After decades of infusion of federal moneys that had yielded only economic stagnation and poverty by the end of the 1980s, economic growth has only come after policies of self-determination took effect (Harvard Project 2008). As stated by the Harvard Project,

It is only when tribes take control of decision making, establish effective and legitimate governing institutions, and embrace strategic use of natural resources, education, location, capital, and other assets that successful and sustainable economic development efforts emerge. (Harvard Project 2008:121-122)

Decolonization has become one of the defining features of Native American social, cultural, economic, spiritual and political recovery, and their pursuit of self-determination. Among the dimensions of this decolonization is the development of what the authors in *Native Pathways: American Indian Culture and Economic Development in the Twentieth Century* call alternative pathways of economic development. There, O’Neill and others challenge the dependency argument by highlighting ways in which various Native American tribes have adapted to and adopted their own economic development strategies (O’Neill 2004). By challenging the notion that economic development requires culture change, Native Americans are participating in market capitalism in culturally distinctive ways (Arnold 2004). In a process referred to earlier in this chapter that Champagne calls tribal capitalism, Native American reservation communities are exercising self-determination and taking control of their own economic development, but in ways that match Native American values and worldviews. The Harvard Project (2008) points out that this is most successful in communities that have strong tribal governments. With strong leadership that is guided by traditional values, and with the ability to draw upon cultural assets, such as kinship, elders’ wisdom, and a values system that emphasizes balance and reciprocity, Native American communities are challenging and modifying Western economics and adapting it to their own systems, often with remarkable success (Shepherd 2004).

By “leverage[ing] policies of self-determination into self-selected investments and focus on developing the legal, regulatory, and physical infrastructure that rewards productivity, holds decision makers accountable, and holds down the risks of political instability for individuals and businesses” (Harvard Project 2008:113), the pattern of failed Euro-American-directed economic initiatives in Indian Country is being broken. The trend, explains the Harvard Project is for

“Indian governments to eschew their long-imposed role as extension agents of federal antipoverty programs and to engage in the task of genuine self-rule by building institutions and creating favorable conditions for investments” (Harvard Project 2008:113). Today, many reservation communities are implementing comprehensive and multifaceted development approaches that are supplanting previous single-strategy interventions that were project-driven or focused on a specific sector such as resource extraction, manufacturing, or tourism (Harvard Project 2008). In the process of implementing their own approaches to development, many Indian tribes that have taken control of their economic development have been rewarded with remarkable success. As a result, Indian Country is experiencing economic growth more rapid than that of the general U.S. economy (Harvard Project 2008). Native American community development financial institutions (CDFIs) are increasingly being created in Indian communities to assist in capital formation and financing needs at the local and regional levels (Harvard Project 2008). CDFIs focus on small business lending, technical assistance, housing development and ownership, as well as land purchase (Harvard Project 2008). Sherry Salway Black describes the Lakota Fund, a CDFI on Pine Ridge created in 1985, explaining that, “While that institution was in itself an asset to the community, it helped to create new assets: Native-owned businesses. These businesses in turn created jobs and generated income. That is what assets do!” (Harvard Project 2008:137).

Like the Lakota Fund, tribal colleges and schools are also making efforts to address reservation employment needs, and to educate tribal members to work in specific fields of particular need to their communities. These fields include business, health care, tribal management, and other technical fields (Harvard Project 2008). Native-based curricula are also being implemented in tribal K-12 schools that highlight economic development and business

(Harvard Project 2008). Still, tribes face challenges in infrastructure in terms of, for example, Internet access, combined with many families' lack of disposable income with which to purchase computers and Internet service (Harvard Project 2008). Tribes are working to bridge these divides, however, and in many cases are working on the tribal government-level to provide for such needs.

For the Oglala Lakota, as with other Native American and indigenous groups worldwide, “The ties of history, culture, identity, family, and place are strong...Poverty tears at those ties (Harvard Project 2008:112). What is happening today, however, is that, through self-determination, tribal communities are exploring ways to strengthen their economies through economic decision-making and institutions that are guided by traditional political, community, and cultural values (Champagne 2004). As stated by Arthur “Butch” Blazer regarding the economic situation on the Mescalero Apache reservation in Arizona, “What was happening at Mescalero and, as I found out later, around much of Indian Country, was the erosion of the ability to pass on the traditional wisdom of our elders...What our leaders had not realized was that our Indian people, like much of America, had been caught up in achieving the ‘American Dream’” (Harvard Project 2008:172). The ability to draw upon, learn from and integrate traditional knowledge from elders and leaders, Native American development is showing us, creates, in the economic context, a strategic means of rebuilding that empowers the entire community. In this way, as stated by the Harvard Project, “the cultural norms of the community can be tapped to energize commitments and hold decision makers, managers, and employees accountable in effective ways” (Harvard Project 2008:132). Further, the integration of traditional understandings can, as argued by Shepherd (2004), help indigenous peoples toward whom Western cultural and economic practices have been imposed, to cope with the impact of

“progress” and “modernization.” As older traditions remain and new ones emerge, indigenous peoples are showing their resilience to dominant governments and economies after decades of profound change (Davis 1998). In doing so, they are showing how, as Davis points out, “what must be defended is not the traditional as opposed to the modern, but, rather, the right of a free indigenous people to choose the components of their lives” (Davis 1998:25).

2.4 Cultural Revitalization

Economic development in Indian Country today, emphasizing, as I have explained, traditional values and driven by self-determination, contradicts decades of efforts aimed at assimilating Native people into mainstream white America. Instead, Native communities are exercising their own forms of development through, not assimilation, but a return to traditional forms that have sustained them for millennia. Having resisted genocide, ethnocide and culturicide, and found ways to adapt economic development to Nativism (rather than the other way-around), Native Americans’ very survival can be seen as resistance, while economic development in Indian Country today can be seen as a form of cultural revitalization.

According to Anthony F.C. Wallace, in his model of revitalization movements, “revitalization” is “a special kind of culture change phenomena” (Wallace 1956:265). Johnson et al. point out how, “Religious revitalization movements, numerous in Native American history, have provided spiritual solutions to the conditions of economic marginalization, political repression, and major losses of territory, as well as the ability to carry on traditional life” (Johnson et al. 1997:10). In response to the changes experienced by the Lakota during the 19th and 20th centuries, as with previous revitalization movements, “New religions emerged and helped Plains peoples cope with their changing world” (Fowler 2001:286).

A revitalization movement is defined by Wallace as “a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture” (1956:265). Native development can be described as cultural revitalization in a variety of ways. While revitalization movements in Native American history are not new, Native communities’ community economic development, in loosely following many of the revitalization phases outlined by Wallace, may, in the end, result in what he sees as a “successful” revitalization movement. Indeed, whether “successful” under Wallace’s definition or not, what is happening in Indian Country is a variety of successful efforts to restore community health, traditional values systems and Native worldviews, and thus need not be declared successful revitalization under an academic definition. Still, an historic framework through which to examine other revitalization efforts, (specifically on Pine Ridge, the Ghost Dance and American Indian Movement), may help to elucidate what makes such efforts successful in terms of cultural restoration and improving the Reservation quality of life, as well as highlight the importance of such efforts to tribes’ traditional identities in the past, present and future. An examination of cultural revitalization may offer further insight into whether, as I will argue later in this thesis, cultural revitalization as exercised through the programs of Thunder Valley CDC makes a community development in the Pine Ridge and other contexts successful.

2.4.1 The Ghost Dance as Revitalization

Wallace (1956) identifies social stress as a precursor to a revitalization movement. In the case of Native America, where tribes faced colonization, population-decimating disease epidemics and constant encroachment on their lands and cultures, this stress has been present for centuries. The 1890 Ghost Dance is a recognized revitalization movement (Kehoe 1989). It

began from perceived stress by its Paiute founder, Wavoka (Jack Wilson), of Mason Valley, Nevada, whose visions inspired his teachings and calls for a return to a traditional way of life for Native American peoples. Wavoka preached that, through a return to a traditional way of life, and through the characteristic circular dance associated with this movement, the Ghost Dance, Native people will survive and prosper once again.

Wavoka (c.1858-1932) is the Paiute Indian prophet who founded the 1890 Ghost Dance religion (Hittman 1996). Like his father, the leader of Wavoka's Paiute community, and who was involved in the previous 1870 Ghost Dance Movement, Wavoka was recognized by the community as spiritually blessed. At a relatively early age he could communicate with the spirit world and control the weather. Wavoka received his revelation from the Creator that would lead him to preach the gospel of the Ghost Dance, during a solar eclipse while lying ill in his bed on January 1, 1889. This gospel was one of peace and living-right as practiced through the ceremony which involved four days of dance and prayer. Wavoka led

the circle dances through which Paiute opened themselves to spiritual influence. Moving always along the path of the sun – clockwise to the left – men, women, and children joined hands in a symbol of the community's living through the circle of the days. As they danced they listened to Jack Wilson's [Wavoka's] songs celebrating the Almighty and Its wondrous manifestations: the mountains, the clouds, snow, stars, trees, antelope. Between dances, the people sat at Jack's feet, listening to him preach faith in universal love. (Kehoe 1989:5)

Wavoka taught that, through a clean, honest life, and by performing the dance ceremony, Native people could be reunited with their deceased family and friends, traditional subsistence could be restored, and Native people could return to a life of meaning and happiness. The exhaustive dance lasted for five days and its participants (likely related to their exhaustion and deep prayer) frequently fell into a state of trance through which they experienced visions. These visions often included the appearance of their lost loved ones and was thus a means to achieve the promised-for reunion, if only for a short time. It was due to that spiritual reunion with the

deceased that the dance as practiced by the Lakota got its name (Kehoe 1989). As Kehoe explains,

It was a marvelous message for people suffering, as the Indians of the West were in 1889, terrible epidemics; loss of their lands, their economic resources, and their political autonomy; malnourishment and wretched housing; and a campaign of cultural genocide aimed at eradicating their languages, their customs, and their beliefs. (1989:8)

The Ghost Dance religion spread quickly throughout the west and was adopted by tribes from California to Oklahoma. Even Mormons came to hear the prophet's teachings in the hope that he may be a manifestation of the return of God (Kehoe 1989). Tribal representatives from as far away as Oklahoma made the journey to experience the revelations of Wavoka, and returned to share his gospel and ceremonial dance. Wavoka even shared his teachings with non-Indians, as his message was one that was

basically applicable to all people of good will. The gospel outlined personal behavior and provided the means to unite individuals into congregations to help one another. Its principal ceremony, the circling dance, pleased and satisfied the senses of the participants, and through the trances easily induced during the long ritual, it offered opportunities to experience profound emotional catharsis. Men and women, persons of all ages and capabilities, were welcomed into a faith of hope for the future, consolation and assistance in the present, and honor to the Indians who had passed into the afterlife. (Kehoe 1989:7)

In this way, the Ghost Dance religion reinforced, but did not supplant other traditions (Kehoe 1989). It did so, however, in a way that reflected Wavoka's own traditional beliefs as well as his peoples' approach to Euro-American encroachment, as offered through "peaceable accommodation" (Kehoe 1989).

By 1889, the conditions of the Paiute and the Lakota Sioux peoples were similar in terms of population decimation, land loss, marginalization, colonization and disease. However, unlike the Paiute, the Lakota had seen the buffalo disappear within a generation, government rations were constantly being cut and their reservation more and more fragmented. They were forced

into a sedentary lifestyle, became nearly entirely subordinate to whites, and resulting from all of this, their resentment and militancy grew (Kehoe 1989). Kehoe explains how,

Indians had worked hard in the spring of 1890 to plant crops as directed by their farm instructors, but by summer, heat and lack of rain had killed a substantial portion of the expected yield. Hunting was no longer an alternative resource, with the Black Hills lost and the bison herds of the Plains exterminated a few years earlier in the early 1880s. Rations were needed as never before. Officials in Washington responded by blaming the Sioux for laziness and obstinacy in taking up the ‘civilized’ ways of European farmers. The government cut rations to less than half of what had been issued only four years before. Sioux families faced starvation. (1989:16-17)

The growing resentment and hopelessness among the Sioux may be why, as Kehoe explains, the Ghost Dance religion became distorted in the Lakota context through the inclusion of the ghost shirts through which it was believed, white men’s bullets could not penetrate (not an aspect of Wavoka’s doctrine), and the increasingly militaristic tone of their Ghost Dance movement (Kehoe 1989). Stated Black Elk about the conditions on the reservation in 1890, “So it was [that] our people were pitiful and in despair” (Black Elk and Neihardt 1932 (1972):178). Government officials and agency superintendents became increasingly fearful of the Ghost Dance and the practice was soon banned among the Sioux. U.S. authorities ordered the arrest of all leaders associated with the dance, and the suppression of all traditional social practices (Hall and Fenelon 2009), as explained earlier in this thesis. For the Sioux, the Ghost Dance movement came to an end soon after the massacre at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890. There, tensions and resentment culminated in a military confrontation resulting in more than half of Big Foot’s Lakota people traveling in South Dakota from Cheyenne River to Pine Ridge, dead or seriously wounded – including women, children and the elderly – among them, the elderly and sickly Chief Big Foot (Brown 1970).

153 were known dead, but many of the wounded crawled away to die afterward. One estimate placed the final total of dead at very nearly three hundred of the original 350 men, women and children. The soldiers lost twenty-five dead and thirty-nine wounded, most of them struck by their own bullets or shrapnel. (Brown 1970:417-418)

The Ghost Dance, like their other religious practices, was finally suppressed and the Indians were “pacified,” following the events at Wounded Knee. Pressured by public outcry against the massacre, reservation appropriations finally increased soon thereafter (Kehoe 1989). While followed by a century of persistent assimilationist practices as explained earlier in this thesis, the Wounded Knee massacre became an enduring symbol of Indian repression (Johnson et al. 1997).

Kehoe argues that, in taking into account just the spread of the Ghost Dance in a short period of time (from Nevada as far east as Oklahoma and west to California in a matter of months) marks it as a revitalization movement. Further, that it was perceived as a threat by Euro-American agents, settlers and the U.S. government, indicates that they too saw the Ghost Dance as the revitalization of a people and culture that were supposed to have been beaten (Kehoe 1989). Consistent with Wallace’s model, Kehoe looks at the culmination of the process of cultural distortion as leading to the reformulation of Lakota cultural identity through revitalization. For the Lakota, she points out, as with other Native American peoples, the period of stress and cultural distortion lasted for decades (Kehoe 1989).

The Oglala [Lakota] seem to demonstrate that continued frustration of efforts to build a self-sustaining economic base adversely affects cultural reformulation. Lakota religion persists and the Oglala as a people survive; yet on the Sioux reservations the mood is still one of seeking a viable, satisfying pattern for life as Lakota. Lakota religious ceremonies, from community Sun Dances of thanksgiving and renewal, to family memorial rites for loved ones, have been proliferating since the 1970s. (Kehoe 1989:144)

2.4.2 Cultural Revitalization Theory

According to Wallace (1956), the five stages of revitalization are:

- (1) Steady state
- (2) Period of increased individual stress
- (3) Period of cultural distortion

(4) Period of revitalization

(5) New steady state

Within the steady state phase, the society is relatively stable with moderate, but not unsteady stress, within which individuals are relatively satisfied, and their *mazeway* – the individual mental understanding of their society and culture, and of the individual’s place within that society and culture – is stable (Wallace 1956). The second phase of revitalization movements, the period of increased individual stress occurs when individuals within a society experience a severe stress as mentioned earlier. In the case of the Ghost Dance, subordination to Euro-American governments, forced assimilation, restriction from the practice of traditional religious ceremonies, and dislocation from traditional homelands, created for Native American communities throughout the west and North America (including the Paiute peoples of Nevada, and the Lakota and other Sioux and Plains tribes), a sense of mental, emotional and physical stress. For the Lakota peoples, these stresses persisted throughout the 20th century. In their case, the Ghost Dance and the subsequent massacre at Wounded Knee can be seen as another event of stress within the tumultuous past of the Lakota resulting in the potential to inspire a revitalization movement.

The third phase of revitalization movements is the period of cultural disorder. Here, according to Wallace, the culture is internally distorted in that “the elements are not harmoniously related but are mutually inconsistent and interfering” (Wallace 1956:269). While manifested in individuals’ behaviors in different ways, it is in this phase that individuals may succumb to regressive behaviors (or “innovations” within their mazeway) such as alcohol abuse, violence, or depression (Wallace 1956). For the observers of the Ghost Dance, this can be seen in the internal conflict that ensued, the depression and alcoholism that took hold during that time, and the overall state of unrest as individuals coped with the loss of their people, their culture and

a meaningful way of life. During the time of Wavoka this was a common circumstance within Native American communities throughout North America.

The fourth phase of revitalization movements is the period of revitalization that encompasses, Wallace argues, mazeway reformulation, communication, organization, adaptation, cultural transformation, and routinization. I will describe each of these briefly: (1) Mazeway reformulation refers to observers' openness to another way of living and to changes to their mazeways. It is the "restoration of order and equilibrium in the mind (Wallace 1956:635) – a striving for consistency of perceptions of the "real" world and one's personal worth in it. Mazeway resynthesis is an identity change, a change in one's image of self" (Van Horn 1973:13). In Wallace's model, mazeway resynthesis takes place when the movement's prophet, in the case of the Ghost Dance, Wavoka, experiences a revelation from the supernatural through dreams or visions in which he is instructed to follow certain prescribed ways of living so as to achieve certain ends (Wallace 1956). For Wavoka and the Ghost Dance, that meant a return to traditional practices, the abandonment of alcohol and other fabrications of the white man, and the practice of the Ghost Dance, so as to, for the Lakota, soon experience the extinction of the white invaders, a return of the buffalo, and a return to peace and prosperity (Kehoe 1989). Thus, (2) the prophet preaches his revelation (communication), and (3) he then makes converts (organization); (4) adaptation occurs as believers modify the practice to their own frameworks or situations as, again, for the Ghost Dance, can be seen in the Lakota adoption of the "Ghost shirts;" (5) cultural transformation occurs when the population comes to accept the new religion, and finally (6) routinization occurs when the religion becomes an accepted part of the society's culture and way of life, and is effective in reducing stress-generating situations (Wallace 1956). According to

Wallace, the result of all of this is the new steady state in which cultural transformation has been accomplished and the new cultural system has proven itself viable (Wallace 1956).

Van Horn argues that:

The concept of a revitalization movement is presented (by Wallace) [as] a process that produces some changes in both the social structure and social organization of a society, but that maintains the identity of a people, even though there is an identity change in the movement. (1973:9)

In the case of the Ghost Dance, the revitalization was identity-affirming. The major social and political change that took place, besides observers' attempts to return to traditional ways, was in their relations with Euro-Americans. While Wavoka preached peace, in the context of Lakota life in the late 19th century, where conflict with Euro-Americans and the U.S. military were constant, and where the overall sense of loss was high, a more militant observance of the dance was adopted as symbolized by the Ghost shirts. In the case of the Ghost Dance, as with other revitalization movements,

A prophet relied on ritual knowledge and power to gather a pan-Indian following either to fight against European invaders or to pray for a cataclysmic event that would restore the Indian nations to the peace, plenty, and life they had known before American or European intrusions. (Johnson et al. 1997:11)

2.4.3 Cultural Revitalization in Indian Country

Revitalization is taking various forms in Indian Country today. As explained by Hall and Fenelon with regard to the Wampanoag of Massachusetts, and as is representative of the overall Native American movement towards revitalization and community economic development, "Revitalization includes their continuing struggles for 'tribal sovereignty,' recognition, maintenance of oral tradition history, and modern economic development that does not run counter to their traditional values" (2009:94). In Hall and Fenelon's examination of the historical

circumstances that inspire indigenous revitalization, they argue that, among the motivations are that the

states [in which they live]...have historically dominated –and often destroyed – indigenous peoples. We consider the history of colonization, hegemonic expansion, conquest, and contemporary patterns of domination. Many indigenous peoples are acutely aware of these historical relations and how they have been affected by them throughout the ages, especially with regard to identity formation. We note that states have strong investments in these relations, especially with respect to land and the economy. (Hall and Fenelon 2009:22)

Cherokee Chief Wilma Mankiller has said that:

We are a revitalized tribe. After every major upheaval, we have been able to gather together as a people and rebuild a community and a government. Individually and collectively, Cherokee people possess an extraordinary ability to face down adversity and continue moving forward. We are able to do that because our culture, though certainly diminished, has sustained us since time immemorial. (1993:xix)

2.4.4 The American Indian Movement as Revitalization

The American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded in 1968 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Conceived during the overall social unrest of the 1960s, and likely inspired by related civil rights movements (for African Americans, Latinos, laborers, women, gay rights activists and Vietnam veterans), the movement sought to bring nationwide attention to the struggles of Native peoples and to their unjust relationship with the U.S. government that, as I have argued here, in many ways, created and exacerbated those struggles. The American Indian Movement, or as Johnson, et al. call the Alcatraz Red Power Movement (ARPM), was “predominantly a struggle to secure redress for overwhelming conditions of political, cultural, and economic disadvantage that mirrored the long history of Indian poverty, not only on reservations, but more recently in urban environments” (Johnson et al. 1997:9). AIM members engaged in demonstrations, sit-ins and property seizures in an effort to gain the attention of “U.S. officials and agencies to gain access to material resources to alleviate poverty and redress cultural and political repression” (Johnson

et al. 1997:11). It was a pan-Indian movement that sought a move away from assimilation toward the preservation of Indian identity and culture (Johnson et al. 1997). Thus, AIM

Did not require major institutional change within Indian or reservation societies but rather sought fairer treatment, the honoring of treaty obligations, and financial assistance from the federal government. (Johnson et al. 1997:11)

AIM's tactics included the seizure of "government" property, as with the November 1969 occupation of Alcatraz Island in California in a symbolic attempt to show a modern example of the U.S. government's disregard for its treaty obligations to Native Americans. The prison was closed in 1963 and no longer used as a federal prison (Johnson et al. 1997). Today, Alcatraz Island is a unit of the National Park Service system. In 1969-1971, however, the island was claimed by AIM activists "by the 'right of discovery' and by the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty, which gave Indians the right to unused federal property that had previously been Indian land" (Johnson et al. 1997:27). Adam Fortunate Eagle stated that "The useless prison island symbolized the contempt with which the government regarded native claims" (Fortunate Eagle (1997:56). Occupiers cited a provision within the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty that provided for the return of "surplus" government property to Native American peoples' possession. There was both internal and external debate over what the provision actually intended, and White House staff and Department of Interior lawyers ultimately found no phrase within the treaty that justified the return of the island to the Indian occupants (Deloria 1997). Still, with extensive media coverage, the takeover brought awareness of both the historical and contemporary struggles of Native American peoples in the United States. AIM leaders compared the conditions on the Alcatraz Island to those on reservations providing an ironic argument for their possession of the island. In their proclamation to the U.S. government that was signed "Indians of All Tribes," the occupiers stated that,

We wish to be fair and honorable in our dealing with Caucasian inhabitants of this land, and hereby offer the following treaty: We will purchase said Alcatraz Island for 24 dollars (\$24) in glass beads and red cloth, a precedent set by the white man's purchase of a similar island [Manhattan Island, New York City] about 300 years ago. (Fortunate Eagle 1996:61)

They furthered that,

We feel that this so-called Alcatraz Island is more than suitable as an Indian Reservation, as determined by the white man's own standards. By this we mean that this place resembles most Indian reservations, in that:

- (1) It is isolated from modern facilities, and without adequate means of transportation;
- (2) It has no fresh running water;
- (3) The sanitation facilities are inadequate;
- (4) There are no oil or mineral rights;
- (5) There is no industry and so unemployment is very great;
- (6) There are no health care facilities;
- (7) The soil is rocky and non-productive and the land does not support game;
- (8) There are no educational facilities;
- (9) The population has always been held as prisoners and kept dependent upon others. (Fortunate Eagle 1997:61-62)

The occupiers of Alcatraz desired to make the island a place for institutions of Indian culture and identity, including a cultural and spiritual center, a center for Native American studies; an Indian center of ecology; an Indian training school; and an Indian museum (Fortunate Eagle (1997)).

The conditions to which AIM leaders sought awareness and redress, Kehoe (1989) explains, originated in a period of cultural distortion that characterized both urban and reservation Indian communities at the time. Unlike the Ghost Dance and other former revitalization movements, AIM was a mostly secular movement. However, with their activism, as Tinker (2004) argues, came a renewed cultural pride that was accompanied by a renewed interest in Native peoples' traditional ceremonies and religion (Tinker 2004). Also in contrast to other Native American cultural revitalization movements, the American Indian Movement did not have a prophet (Kehoe 1989). What they did have was a common national agenda for self-determination for Native American people and communities, based on common historical

experiences (Kehoe 1989). “Building Indian colleges, creating Indian studies programs, and preserving Indian cultures through federally funded cultural centers and museums were goals that could be achieved while working within U.S. Institutions” (Johnson et al. 1997:11).

Tinker associates AIM with “the intensification of the modern indigenous movement of resistance, beginning in the 1960s” (Tinker 2004:56). It was thus a period of spiritual and cultural renaissance, through which “Indian identity was rekindled with a new pride...[that]... became more and more intimately connected with the Indian political resistance of the day” (Tinker 2004:56). AIM provided an avenue through which Native Americans could resist racial discrimination and disenfranchisement.

Today, it is tribal community colleges teaching the language, beliefs and legends of their peoples along with competency in dealing with the dominant society. Revitalization is strong, from multiplying Sun Dances on the Plains reservations, to a growing serious literature written by self-consciously Indian authors. Religion and politics are aspects of the same tenacity and resilience in America’s Indian nations. (Kehoe 1989:153)

The activism of the 1970s as embodied by AIM, contributed to the

Cultural renaissance currently underway in many Indian communities in the form of tribal museum development, tribal language instruction, cultural preservation and apprenticeship programs, tribal history projects, and the preservation and reinstatement of ceremonial and spiritual practices. [But] Perhaps the most profound effect of the ARPM was to educate and change the consciousness of people in the U.S. and around the world. By the 1980s, more Americans were familiar with Indian issues as a result of the attention brought to bear by ARPM activists. While Americans have generally demanded assimilation from Indians, the ARPM made the point that Indians have cultures, traditions, history, and communities that they want to preserve – but that they also want equal justice, economic opportunity, access to education, and more accurate portrayal of Indians in the media and in history books. (Johnson et al. 1997:38)

2.5 Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation

The mission statement of the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation (Thunder Valley CDC) is,

Empowering Lakota youth and families to improve the health, culture and environment of our communities, through the healing and strengthening of cultural identity.
(<http://www.thundervalley.org/who-we-are/mission-statement/>)

The Thunder Valley CDC is showing what can be done when Native peoples exercise their self-determination to achieve community-defined goals. With an emphasis on development and empowerment through community and cultural healing, Thunder Valley CDC is taking a holistic and realistic action-based approach to reservation development and community rebuilding. In doing so they aim to strengthen tribal identity; revitalize the Lakota language; educate Native youth on treaty and sovereignty issues; empower Native youth to become leaders and to learn about and fight for environmental and social justice, respect for the land, water and the Lakota way of life; and to assist community members by connecting them to financial literacy and homeownership resources (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a). Thus, Thunder Valley CDC is utilizing economic development to foster community development and revitalize cultural identity.

The Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation (Thunder Valley CDC) was conceived of in 2006 amidst a discussion among a group of Oglala Lakota on Pine Ridge about the creation of a non-profit organization that could address social, economic and cultural issues facing Native Lakota youth and communities (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b). “After a series of community meetings to garner input on priorities and community buy-in, the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation was born” (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a:4). The status of non-profit was attained in March of 2007. Built from community-level input and support, from Lakota youth to the elderly, Thunder Valley CDC embarked on an ambitious and exciting effort to rebuild their community through a shared community vision. The goals of Thunder Valley CDC are priorities thus laid out by the community of which it is comprised. The following goals that are defining principles of Thunder Valley CDC’s work “and reflect our community values as a whole,” are:

- Strengthen cultural identity of Lakota youth and families
- Empower youth and families to learn and utilize Lakota language
- Educate youth on treaty and sovereignty issues
- Develop young leaders to continue strengthening the Thunder Valley CDC as well as the greater Lakota Nation
- Empower youth to learn about earth and fight for environmental and social justice issues
- Instill respect in the younger generations for the land, water and Lakota way of life
- Comprehensively plan and develop land purchased by Thunder Valley CDC for the surrounding youth and families
- Assist community members by connecting them to financial literacy and home ownership resources (<http://www.thundervalley.org/who-we-are/>)

While economic development is part of the plan of Thunder Valley CDC through a variety of resources that I will explain, the mission of Thunder Valley CDC represents an “amazing renaissance of traditional values and cultural pride” (<http://www.thundervalley.org/who-we-are/history/>). Thunder Valley CDC is guided by values that honor the Lakota Peoples’ past while using new tools, ideas and strategies of the present to create opportunities for the future (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b). Thus, theirs, like other Native cultural revitalization efforts today, is one that embraces much of the modern, but in a way that is guided and thus strengthened by the traditional.

2.5.1 Oyate Omniciye

Through the inaugural grant of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Program, Thunder Valley CDC coordinated a regional planning process for the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in

2010. This gave birth to the *Oyate Omniciye*, the Oglala Lakota Plan, a regional planning document designed to guide reservation development efforts and define sustainability objectives for the reservation. In preliminary discussions for the development of the *Oyate Omniciye*,

A dialogue emerged about whether the Lakota language had a word for “sustainability.” Ultimately, the group came to the simple words: *Oyate Omniciye* – Roughly translated, means, “The Circle Meetings of the People,” but the phrase carries deeper meanings. First, “*Oyate*” does not just refer to humans, but can include all living things. Secondly, calling for an “*omniciye*” is not to be taken lightly. This word signifies that very important things are to be considered, and in the way of the Lakota, the ultimate goal is to seek consensus for all who wished to remain in the conversation. This process was to create a “region” (defined as the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation) which a Regional Plan could be developed through communication and partnerships of those living and working within this ‘Region’ which fully encompasses the boundaries and jurisdiction of the Oglala Lakota Nation. (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:18)

Thus, Thunder Valley CDC facilitated a community conversation with input from “children to elders, elected officials, community leaders and those vested in building [a] healthier and more sustainable tribal community” (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:18). Through collaboration, outreach, information gathering, open and honest discussion, and an in-depth look at existing issues affecting the everyday lives of those living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and how they may be improved, the *Oyate Omniciye* was created, and in October 2012, was adopted into law (<http://www.thundervalley.org/projects/oyate-omniciye-regional-planning-project/>).

The *Oyate Omniciye* is guided by the following six Principles of Livability:

- (1) Transportation
- (2) Affordable housing
- (3) Economic competitiveness
- (4) Support communities
- (5) Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- (6) Value communities and neighborhoods

It includes documents and aids to help communities implement their own version of the plan, including a sustainability workbook. It is the region's guiding document on sustainable community development. The emphases of the Oyate Omniciye are cultural re-identification, and economic development that meets the community's needs in a sustainable way. The plan's emphasis on cultural restoration reveals the extent of the damage historic forces of change and assimilation have wrought on the reservation and how important restoring cultural identity is to community resilience and healing. The plan exemplifies its own cultural restoration emphasis by being written in Lakota, then translated into English. As stated within the plan:

As a people, we have undergone great turmoil and pain associated with the loss of traditional homelands and cultural lifeways. Often the policies of a larger, different, and more dominant political and cultural system have resulted in a degradation of the Lakota familial tribal structure and language. The path to healing has been revealed in the last few decades, and putting the plan into action will play a crucial role in sorting out over a century's worth of misguided policies, tangled up programs, and nearly extinguished cultural nuances that have been a disservice and frustration for the resilient people of the region. (Oyate Omniciye 2012:7)

Similarly, the plan's emphasis on sustainability reveals Lakota peoples' sense of obligation to both to past and future generations. The Oyate Omniciye defines a sustainable way of life as:

Honoring those who came before us.

Meeting the needs of the present generation.

Not compromising the future,

So that coming generations are able to meet their own needs

And guide our vision and renew each cycle of life. (Oyate Omniciye 2012:13)

The Oyate Omniciye uses the concept of sustainable development as defined in the United Nations' Brundtland Report. That definition favors "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Economic Development 1987:27). This approach emphasizes inter-

generational equity and welfare as the ultimate need and goal of sustainable development.

Thunder Valley CDC's "Theory of Change" represents many of the elements of both buen vivir and tribal capitalism discussed earlier. It is their approach to development and sustainability that is rooted in the triple-bottom-line concept. That is, that

Sustainable communities must consider social needs (People), environmental responsibility (Planet), and economic vitality (Prosperity). This concept nurtures a vibrant, healthy community that embraces its cultural heritage while also celebrating its role as community, ecosystem and marketplace. (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:5)

By applying this theory in a variety of ways, Thunder Valley CDC is showing that economic development is a way to meet social needs, while not necessarily a means in itself for wealth creation alone. Acknowledging Native American peoples' past as driving many of the development needs in Indian Country, Thunder Valley CDC states that Thunder Valley and its partners are "...changing the story. Owning the story and directing what the future chapters may hold for our future generations and on our own terms" (Thunder Valley CDC 2013b:26).

This theory of change and the principles of the Oyate Omniciye guide all of Thunder Valley CDC's programs and initiatives.

Twelve interrelated initiatives emerged from the broad and public engagement and professional analysis of this two-year planning process that hold the greatest potential for achieving the Oyate Omniciye. These initiatives are:

- (1) Regional Planning Office
- (2) Governance
- (3) Language
- (4) Youth and Young Ones
- (5) Model Community Development
- (6) Health and Wellness
- (7) Education, Training and Outreach
- (8) Economy
- (9) Land Use
- (10) Environment and Ecosystems
- (11) Communication
- (12) Transportation (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a:4)

Starting with the Thunder Valley Regenerative Community – the first implementation project of the Model Community Development Initiative – Thunder Valley CDC and its various partners are planning a development project aimed at “create[ing] sustainable and interconnected communities that provide better housing, places for business to thrive and a healthy supportive environment for youth, elderly and families” (Thunder Valley CDC 2013a:5). The *Regenerative Community* is one of several interrelated Thunder Valley CDC projects that also include an Empowerment Center; Sustainable Housing Research Project; Youth Shelter Project; Walking, Hiking and Biking Trail; Thunder Valley Community House; Thunder Valley E-Tanka Café; Youth Leadership Development; Food Sovereignty and Community Gardens; Owe Aku – providing training and resources in environmental justice; Language Immersion Childcare-Iyapi Glukinipi; Sustainable Home Ownership Project Collaborative and the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program.

2.5.2 Community Needs

A study published in 2014 on “Strengthening the Pine Ridge Economy” by the Kirwin Institute (in collaboration with Thunder Valley CDC and PolicyLink), identifies several different areas of need to strengthen the economy on Pine Ridge. The report emphasizes accurate population statistics, housing, infrastructure, employment and business as key areas of focus with which to build and support economic recovery and opportunity on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Norris et al. 2014). The report states that,

A broadly agreed-upon imperative is the immediate and significant need for housing and economic investment on Pine Ridge Reservation. While there is a lack of standardized data to adequately assess the need, one credible source, a 2013 survey of Head Start / Early Head Start families, indicated that top issues impacting families were ‘housing, death of a family member, and unemployment.’ ... Given the stress, poverty and poor health engendered by difficult living conditions, life expectancy is far below that of US

averages. For example, a 1997 study found that men on the Pine Ridge Reservation live 16 ½ years less than average U.S. males; women on the Reservation live 13 ½ years less than average U.S. females. (Norris et al. 2014:4)

The study pointed out the absence of reliable census data on the reservation (which is commonplace for minority, low income, and young people within U.S. Census Bureau statistics) (Norris et al. 2014). Lack of reliable census data contributes to the challenges faced by the Pine Ridge community by skewing funding allocations, not accurately representing community growth, impeding the ability to, for example, accurately ascertain community needs for housing, employment, etc. (Norris et al. 2014). Comparing existing population data-sources shows a range of 18,834 – 50,000 individuals living on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

The need for housing on Pine Ridge is referred to as a “crisis” which is also elaborated on in the Kirwan Institute’s economic report. In a region where 65% of the population is under the age of 25 (<http://www.thundervalley.org/who-we-are/history/>), Pine Ridge experienced a population growth of 21% from the year 2000 to 2010 (versus 7.8% for the state of South Dakota) (Norris et al. 2014). This underscores the need for housing in the Pine Ridge community where it is not uncommon to have “3 or 4 families packed into a single two-bedroom home or a family of six tries to survive in a one bedroom apartment. This overcrowding affects the physical, social and mental state of our people. Schooling is impacted, health conditions suffer and the family unit is impaired” (Norris et al. 2014:8). In a Congressional testimony, Director Paul Iron Cloud called for the building of 4,000 homes and 1,000 home repairs on the Reservation (Norris et al. 2014).

With the lack of available housing is a lack of adequate housing in terms of structural soundness and need for repairs. As stated in the Kirwan report, nearly 70% of all reservation housing is HUD housing or a trailer home. The median home value on the reservation is \$25,900 – barely more than one fifth the U.S. average of \$119,600 (Norris et al. 2014). These values are

due to the substandard quality of the housing stock and a lack of widely accessible housing finance system for tribal land holdings (Norris et al. 2014). Further, black mold has been found in 75% of tribal housing units, posing a significant health risk, and 70-80% of housing is in need of repair (Norris et al. 2014:9). Housing conditions like these also result in high utility-costs that further depletes residents' already stretched incomes (Rose 2014). Thus, housing is a major concern on Pine Ridge in terms of quality, availability, choice, and cost.

The Kirwan report also highlights employment needs on the Pine Ridge Reservation. For example, 51% of those who work on the reservation live somewhere else, and 60.7% of those who live on the reservation work somewhere else (Norris et al. 2014). Further, of those who work on the reservation, while Native Americans account for 90% of the residents, they make up just over 40% of those employed on the reservation, while the "White Alone" worker population makes up 55.7% of those employed on the reservation (Norris et al. 2014:15). "ACS [American Community Survey] estimates place the labor force participation rate on Pine Ridge at 49.9%. This low labor force participation rate should be understood in the context of the employment environment on the reservation. The combination of a lack of employment opportunities, a workforce that lacks the skills to do the best paying, skilled jobs on the reservation, and the large commutes to work effectively closes out many reservation residents from the local economy" (Norris et al. 2014:18).

Equity and opportunity will not be achieved in Indian communities if they are not compatible with Native values. For example, the Thunder Valley CDC community development plan foregrounds Native knowledge, culture and language, sharing, ecosystem protection, and support for vulnerable populations, including the elderly and youth. Economic development, land use planning, infrastructure development, housing availability and affordability are critical, but they must align to contribute to a sustainable, supportive community. (Norris et al. 2014:24)

2.5.3 Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program

Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program is a response to the housing crisis and employment needs on Pine Ridge. Implemented in January 2015, the aim of this program is to build the construction workforce capacity on the reservation for the construction of energy efficient homes that reservation residents can afford. Incorporating financial skills development and training, and assisting with homeownership, the Workforce Development Program is simultaneously addressing three of the Pine Ridge Reservation's major challenges: lack of adequate housing, the extreme shortage of available housing, and unemployment. By emphasizing sustainable housing, the program is addressing residents' high utility costs, while building reservation capacity within the growing industry of alternative energy. In this way, Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program is a holistically designed training and education opportunity that aims to address the various areas of needs for development of the reservation. They are providing employment opportunities in an area characterized by the lack thereof, leveraging funding sources and other support to build good quality homes that community members can then afford, and ultimately, through all of this, supporting economic opportunity and development on the reservation.

The Workforce Development Program closely follows the goals of the Regenerative Community Development Initiative and aims to provide the construction workforce needed to help achieve the goals of that initiative. Thus, an arm of the Workforce Development Program, which is still in the development phase, is an eventual Thunder Valley CDC-owned and operated construction company that will then be able to permanently employ its Workforce Development participants. Thunder Valley emphasizes the Workforce Development Program as a means for

participants to contribute to the Regenerative Community Development Project as one that will be

Built by our own people [and] sets the tone for future sustainable community developments to build across the Oglala Lakota Nation and beyond. Our workers are part of a historic change for the better happening right now on the Pine Ridge as the Lakota set the example of what sustainability in community design looks like. (<http://www.thundervalley.org/workforce-development/>)

Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program is targeted to 18-26 year old Lakota males and females who live on the Pine Ridge Reservation. They target youths in this area who are unemployed and who may or may not have career interests in construction. The goal of the Workforce Development Program is to provide job skills and training in construction, while also helping participants to build their employment histories and resumes, their professional skills, financial literacy, and more. Participants develop and build upon their unique individual success plans, individual education plans and construction skills plans, and take part in various cultural program-components that again, highlight Thunder Valley CDC's emphasis on cultural restoration and revitalization. Participants are also provided with resources specific to their needs, and program training and services in areas such as Family Restoration training, group therapy sessions and equine therapy.

The Workforce Development Program, with Thunder Valley CDC's Sustainable Homeownership Program (SHOP) are related programs that, in October 2014, were together awarded a generous grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA). This is a five-year grant that, for the Workforce Development Program, is broken up into five "cohorts." Each cohort consists of the ten participants selected to participate in the program for each cohort's ten-month duration. The selection criteria for participants for this current cohort (Cohort 1) was based on age (due to grant constraints, the program is at this time directed only to 18-26 year-olds), and employment status in accordance with their effort to help address unemployment on

the reservation (selectees were limited to those who were unemployed at the time of their application). The selectees also had to be in residence on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The Workforce Development Program provides both classroom instruction and on-the-job construction training. Cohort 1 participants received training in CPR, construction safety and the principles and methods of sustainable construction, and on-the-job training to complete one of the housing “model” units, which may later house further office space for Thunder Valley CDC staff members. Participants received a weekly stipend of \$250, part of which was put into Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) as coordinated through Thunder Valley CDC’s partnerships with local banking institutions, such as the Lakota Federal Credit Union. Participants also received further trainings, and opportunities for spiritual and cultural activities that counted towards their 40 hour work-week. Participants worked Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

My role in the evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program related to the development and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation-package (as explained in Chapter 1), with which to track the success of both individual participants and the program overall throughout this first year of implementation. The purpose of these evaluation tools was to provide a measureable means to ascertain whether and to what degree Thunder Valley CDC is reaching the goals set forth within the ANA (Administration for Native Americans) sustainable employment and economic development strategies) grant agreement. Further, the evaluation results provide Thunder Valley CDC with a means of tracking program and participants’ goals-achievements, to identify strengths and weaknesses within the program, to identify and provide justification for further funding needs, and to contribute to the overall implementation of their Regenerative Community

Development Initiative. I developed the evaluation tools, including the participants' intake evaluations, individual success plans, individual education plans, and construction skills plans – which were key components in the effort to identify individual participants' education, physical, emotional, financial, professional, and personal needs, and to provide a tool to guide and track participants' progress within the program. The evaluation tools, as will be described in Chapter 4 of this thesis, were informed by the review of existing literature on Thunder Valley CDC and its programs, discussions with Thunder Valley CDC staff members on what information they wanted to obtain from the evaluation tools, review of Thunder Valley CDC's ANA grant application materials, and review of previous Thunder Valley CDC initiatives in particular, and similar projects on Pine Ridge in-general.

Participants' progress within the Workforce Development Program is measured utilizing individual success plans (ISPs), individual education plans (IEPs), and construction skills plans (CSPs) meant to enable participants to track their accomplishments as they move throughout the program, as well providing staff members with a means to understand individual participants' growth as they move throughout the program. Thus, upon entry into the program, participants completed individual success plans individually in person with the program manager, individual education plans individually with the education coordinator, and construction skills plans individually with the lead construction trainer. Each of these plans are intended to give the staff members and program evaluators (myself with, and as directed by, Sweet Grass Consulting) with the participatory involvement of the program participants, relevant understanding of their individual backgrounds. Questions regarding participants' personal goals and challenges were also included, with which the respective staff member responsible for the plan identified with participants. These plans thus developed into participatory and detailed strategies to, for

example, use participants' individual strengths to meet their individual goals. The plans were also used to determine what resources Thunder Valley CDC can provide to address participants' individual challenges. The ISPs, IEPs and CSPs were thus built from extensive staff member-participant interviews as guided by the evaluator-developed ISP, IEP and CSP templates. The information obtained from each plan provides important data on both participants as a group as well as individual participants. Understanding participants' needs and goals for this program, and if/how those goals are being met, provides Thunder Valley CDC with important information on the progress of the program in terms of meeting its goals. The ISPs (with the individual education and construction skills plans) provide a means of measuring and tracking both program and individual participant status and success.

CHAPTER 3

PROJECT DESIGN

3.1 Project Phase I: Research Preparation and Review of Thunder Valley CDC Materials

This stage began with a meeting among myself, SGC staff, and Thunder Valley CDC staff to introduce myself and my role as a student-researcher in association with my applied thesis, and to delineate our roles within the program, contract and applied-thesis-project agreement. We attempted to determine how my strengths will best-fit within SGC's contract goals, and developed preliminary lists of deliverables with associated due dates. Phase 1 also involved research preparation through literature reviews on, for example, community development theory and practice, and review of the SGC and Thunder Valley CDC resources with regard to this and previous projects.

Another important component of Phase 1 involved the critical evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC's stated goals and objective work plans with regard to the Workforce Development Program. This review helped to determine how to prepare a viable measurement package on the program's success so as to determine if and how such goals are achieved as the program moves forward. Phase I concluded with a meeting with SGC co-owner, Andrea Akers, my advisor, Dr. Alicia Re Cruz, and myself in May, 2015 to ensure mutual understanding of the project goals, objectives, and data gathering and dissemination procedures in accordance with the requirements of the applied thesis as well as the needs of SGC.

3.2 Project Phase II: Development and Implementation of Evaluation Tools – Deliverables

This phase of the applied thesis project involved the development and implementation of what comprised much of the “deliverables” of this project – the evaluation tools for Thunder

Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program. The initial deliverables/evaluation tools identified and designed included the items listed below. As the program progressed, it was determined that some of these evaluation tools such as, the participant quarterly evaluation, obtained redundant information and were therefore not used.

- Participant intake evaluation
- Individual education plan
- Individual success plan
- Construction skills plan
- Participant quarterly evaluation
- Participant early-exit questionnaire
- Participant post evaluation
- Staff intake evaluation
- Staff quarterly evaluation
- Staff post evaluation
- Evaluations analysis/reports – 3 months, 6 months
- Program viability report

Phase 2 deliverables were directed toward development of viable measurement tools to determine participants' respective starting points in educational background, professional skills, construction skills and experience, employment and housing status, and program status in terms of readiness and capacity to meet program goals. This evaluation took place first at the start of the program in January, 2015 and will be revisited at the end of Cohort 1 for the final evaluation report. Phase 2 deliverables are a suite of program-launch evaluations for participants that includes a participant intake evaluation, participant individual success plans, participant individual education plans, participant construction skills plans, and participant quarterly

evaluations. Staff evaluations were also part of this phase and deliverables set. They took the form of staff intake evaluations and staff quarterly evaluations. Each was specifically designed for each staff member using their previously defined responsibilities and goals within the program.

The purpose of these evaluation tools – the deliverables listed on the previous page and described in this section – were to provide a meaningful quantitative measure of the success of Thunder Valley CDC in meeting its short-and long-term goals. While success of Thunder Valley CDC’s long-term goals cannot be adequately ascertained within the duration of this thesis project, the development of a reliable measure for short-term success will aid in the determination of long-term success and goals-achievement. The groundwork will be set for the remaining four years of the contract and grant, and the evaluation needs of Thunder Valley CDC therefrom. Reflecting the collaborative nature of this project, while I developed the drafts of each of these evaluation tools, SGC provided their professional input and final edits, and Thunder Valley CDC provided final approval.

3.2.1 Description of Deliverables: Design and Implementation

(For more a more detailed description of each deliverable, see Chapter 4).

- (1) *Participant intake evaluation*: The participant intake evaluation was a short, general questionnaire that was administered to participants at the start of their participation in the program. It included general questions about what motivated them to join the program, what they expected to achieve, and what barriers they may face in completing the program.
- (2) *Individual Success Plan (ISP)*: The individual success plan enabled the program manager to determine what resources individual participants needed to achieve their professional, personal, physical, emotional, and financial goals. It established a baseline for participants’ current status in these categories, isolated participants’ individual success goals and identified barriers to achieving each of the goals. ISPs

- were unique to the individual participant and thus varied widely. They have been revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.
- (3) *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*: The individual education plan functioned to establish a baseline for participants' current levels of education. It isolated their individual education skills and individual education goals, and outlined and documented plans to achieve those goals. IEPs were unique to the individual participant and thus varied widely. They have been revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.
 - (4) *Construction Skills Plan (CSP)*: The construction skills plan provided the format for the Lead Construction Trainer's initial interview with individual participants. The CSP provided a measure of what specific skills participants learned from the course, and will be revisited at the end of the program to determine what actual skills participants acquired. The CSP is highly varied. Components have been revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.
 - (5) *Participant Quarterly Evaluation*: This brief, general, and regularly implemented assessment was designed to determine if/how participants are achieving their goals as outlined in their IEPs, ISPs and CSPs. It was also intended to address any issues or problems participants may have that could impact their participation in the program (i.e. stress levels, transportation, etc.).
 - (6) *Participant Early-Exit Interview*: Provided in the event that a participant does not complete the program, this evaluation was designed to determine why the participant left the program before achieving their certification, what Thunder Valley CDC could have done (if anything) to have prevented it, and what skills they have acquired thus far.
 - (7) *Participant Post Evaluation*: This evaluation will be administered to participants following their completion of the Workforce Development Program. It will function to determine what specific skills participants learned in this program and will be compared against participants' IEPs, ISPs and CSPs to provide a meaningful and measurable depiction of both program and participant success.
 - (8) *Participant Post Evaluation – Quarterly*: This evaluation is designed to determine if/how Thunder Valley CDC Workforce Development Program graduates have obtained jobs as result of their participation in the program, and what other related goals they have achieved since program completion. It provides general follow-up information and feedback. This evaluation tracks both participants' short- and long-term successes.
 - (9) *Staff Intake Evaluation*: This general questionnaire was provided to all staff members at the launch of the Workforce Development Program. Its function was to determine how well Thunder Valley CDC staff members felt prepared to perform their roles

within Thunder Valley CDC, specifically within the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program.

- (10) *Staff Quarterly Evaluation:* These were detailed self-assessments for staff members through which to provide quarterly updates based on task completion, goals achievement, and any problems encountered.
- (11) *Staff Post Evaluation:* These are self-reported staff questionnaires for staff members to complete at the end of the ten-month program for Cohort 1.

3.3 Project Phase III: Data Analysis

Following the development and implementation of each of these evaluation tools, utilizing Salesforce – a shared-access computer program through which evaluation information was compiled, managed, and “shared” – the third phase of the project began – the ongoing data management and analysis phase. During this phase, I drew the completed evaluation materials listed above from Salesforce, and analyzed them. From these analyses, I created a report for each deliverable that summarizes the data for SGC who then edited it and formatted it according to their standards and specifications. The final report of each was submitted through SGC to Thunder Valley CDC. The reports listed below are formal analyses using Salesforce data from which data was summarized and represented using graphs and tables.

- (1) Participant program application analysis
- (2) Participant intake analysis
- (3) Staff intake analysis
- (4) Staff quarterly analysis (not completed due to staff member turnover)

3.4 Project Phase IV: Data Analysis, Cont.

Phase 4 deliverables took the form of in-depth analyses of program progress on a quarterly basis. Using the participant intake evaluations and other measures developed,

monitored, gathered and analyzed throughout previous phases, this phase provided an assessment of participant as well as program successes up to that point. Measured against both participant-reported goals as defined through the IEPs, ISPs and CSPs, and Thunder Valley CDC's short and long-term goals, these analyses provided Thunder Valley CDC with a meaningful depiction of their success within quarterly (three-month) intervals. The participant-observation segment followed, for which I attended participants' construction classes to observe both participants and instructors. In addition to participant observation, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Thunder Valley CDC staff members, and a focus group with program participants. The development of the interview and focus group questions were partially informed by the results obtained in previous phases (i.e. the ISP, IEP and CSP quarterly reports). The data analysis reports (deliverables) provided by the end of Phase 4 include:

- (1) *Evaluations Analysis I*: Initially this was going to be a Three-Month Progress Report. However, it was determined that quarterly review of ISPs, IEPs and CSPs would provide the same information. These therefore took the form of quarterly ISP, IEP and CSP analyses.
- (2) *Evaluations Analysis II*: Initially this was going to be a Six-Month Progress Report. However, it was determined that quarterly review of ISPs, IEPs and CSPs would provide the same information. These therefore took the form of quarterly ISP, IEP and CSP analyses.
- (3) *Participant Observation*: Conducted on August 20, 2015 I spent the day at Thunder Valley CDC observing Workforce Development program participants throughout their work-day. I participated in activities such as the morning prayer, the IDA class and toured the nearly-completed "model" home that was mostly built and completed during this cohort.
- (4) *Focus Group and Data Analysis Report*: Conducted on August 20 2015, the focus group consisted of seven of the Workforce Development Program participants who reported to work that day. It took place after lunch and was approximately 30 minutes in duration. A summary report of the findings was submitted as part of the Phase 4 deliverables.
- (5) *Staff Interview and Data Analysis Report*: Conducted on August 20, 2015 I conducted two interviews with Workforce Development Program staff members. I first

interviewed the education coordinator one-on-one. This took place in the morning and lasted approximately 45 minutes. Later in the morning I interviewed two other staff members, the program manager and the lead construction trainer together. This interview lasted approximately 1 hour. A summary report of the findings was submitted as part of the Phase 4 deliverables.

- (6) *Program Viability Report*: To be completed and submitted at the official end of the program for Cohort 1.

3.5 Project Phase V: Reports and Thesis

The fifth and final phase of the project was informed by all the data obtained from the previous phases to complete the final deliverable for this project – a program viability report. This report will be a theoretical assessment of program success and will detail the findings from each of the tools contained within the evaluation package, using the results obtained in phases 1-4. It will also provide informed conclusions regarding this thesis project's two main research questions. It will address the main goals of Thunder Valley CDC and provide an in-depth look into how and why they were or were not successful in achieving them. The report will then evaluate Thunder Valley's successes compared to case studies of other successful community housing and workforce development efforts, in search of themes to elucidate further what makes a community housing and workforce development initiative successful. Ultimately, I will ascertain if and why Thunder Valley's effort can provide a model for sustainable construction and community development elsewhere. Further, as previously explained, this phase will examine how the sustainability element of the program fits into Thunder Valley CDC's achievement of overall program goals and, through the theoretical perspectives of cultural revitalization and community economic development, how and why this form of community development is effective. The program viability report will be a comprehensive summary of findings from the data analyses and previous phases of the research. Due to some unforeseen

delays in the Workforce Development Program which will be explained in the next chapter, the completion of this report will take place in December and results will therefore not be detailed within this thesis.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES

4.1 Phase I Deliverables

As designed, there were no deliverables for phase I.

4.2 Phase II Deliverables

4.2.1 Participant Intake Evaluation

The participant intake evaluation was intended to understand why participants decided to join the Workforce Development Program, how they learned about the program, what they know about the program, what they are most excited to learn about through the program, what their motivations are for completing the program, and general contact information for individual participants. Development of the participant intake form was informed by the examination of Thunder Valley CDC's program goals, and Thunder Valley CDC's assessment needs as determined by their objective work plans and discussions with staff members. It took the form of a short, general questionnaire that was administered to participants at the start of their participation in the program. It included general questions about what motivated them to join the program, what they expected to achieve, and what barriers they may face in completing the program. The questionnaire included Likert-scale questions, yes/no questions, and open-ended questions.

4.2.2 Individual Success Plan (ISP)

The development of Workforce Development Program participants' individual success plans was informed by a preliminary ISP template created by Thunder Valley CDC, discussions

with the program manager, and a review of Thunder Valley CDC goals for participants in this area as indicated in Thunder Valley CDC's objective work plans. The ISP template originally designed by Thunder Valley CDC provided an outline of the factors Thunder Valley staff members wanted the ISP to measure. It included questions that required participants' consideration in terms of what their physical, emotional, personal, financial, and professional goals are; how they aim to achieve those goals in the short and long-term; what challenges they may face in achieving those goals and how they plan to meet those challenges. The ISP also asked participants' to define, for example, what the word "success" means to them to give evaluators an understanding of whether, after their completion of the program, participants' will have considered themselves "successful" under their own definition. This also helped to further target participants' ISPs by requiring that they consider their goals in-depth. It also helped participants to identify successes when they occur. The ISP asked participants to identify their skills by selecting those that apply to them from an extensive skills-list provided. The list included planning skills, computer skills, research skills, and analytical skills, among others. This list was intended to help participants identify skills they might not have realized they had or been able to express without probing.

The ISP enabled the program manager to determine what resources individual participants need to achieve their professional, personal, emotional, and financial goals; establishes a baseline for participants' current status in these categories, isolates participants' individual success goals, and identifies barriers to achieving each of the goals identified. ISPs are unique to the individual participant and thus vary widely as they were designed to reflect the unique backgrounds and experiences of each Workforce Development Program participant. At the same time, the ISPs were designed to gather participant information in a standardized way to

enable comparative and quantitative examinations among the participants in the cohort. The ISPs are revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.

4.2.3 Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The development of Workforce Development Program participants' individual education plans was informed by a preliminary IEP template created by Thunder Valley CDC, discussions with the education coordinator, and a review of Thunder Valley CDC goals for participants in this area as indicated in Thunder Valley CDC's objective work plans. The IEP template originally designed by Thunder Valley CDC provided an outline of the factors Thunder Valley CDC staff members wanted the IEP to measure. It included questions that required participants' consideration in terms of what their educational goals and needs are as they relate to successful completion of their ISP goals; how they aim to achieve those goals in the short-term and long-term; what challenges they may face in achieving those goals and how they plan to meet those challenges. The IEP asked participants' to define what their individual strengths and education skills are; how they tend to learn; what keeps them motivated; what their education backgrounds are; and asks about their social and relationship skills. The IEP also included a segment intended for completion by the education coordinator on participants' attendance, their academic achievements both within and outside the program, and participants' respective levels of engagement in the classroom and on-the-job. The IEPs helped the education coordinator to track participants' attendance and performance, helped participants' determine if/how their education goals relate to their success and career goals, and what steps need to be taken to help participants along the path to achieving their goals.

The IEP enabled the education coordinator to determine what resources individual participants need to achieve their education goals; establishes a baseline for participants' education background; isolates participants' individual education goals and achievements; and identifies barriers to achieving each of the goals identified. IEPs are unique to the individual participant and thus vary widely, as they were designed to reflect the unique backgrounds and experiences of each Workforce Development Program participant. At the same time, the IEPs were designed to gather participants' information in a standardized way to enable comparative and quantitative examinations among the participants in the cohort. The IEPs are revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.

4.2.4 Construction Skills Plan (CSP)

The construction skills plan was not initially identified within the evaluation needs of Thunder Valley CDC. After going through Thunder Valley CDC's program goals, however, it was decided that a plan designed to outline and track participants' construction skills-development as they move throughout the program could be helpful for participants as well as evaluators to identify program goals-achievement. The development of Workforce Development Program participants' construction skills plans was informed by the course syllabus, the course instructor, and course goals. This extensive and detailed form provides the format for the lead construction trainer's initial interview with individual participants. The interview was intended to determine individual participants' current levels of experience and education in construction and sustainable construction, and was guided by the evaluator-developed construction skills plan. The CSP provides a measure of what specific skills participants learn from the courses and training received in this program, and will be revisited at the end of the program to determine

what actual skills participants acquired. The CSP is designed to reflect the unique backgrounds and experiences of each participant and is therefore highly varied. At the same time, the CSPs were designed to gather participants' information in a standardized way to enable comparative and quantitative examinations among the participants in the cohort. The CSPs are intended to be revisited and updated on a quarterly basis.

4.2.5 Participant Quarterly Evaluation

The participant quarterly evaluations were brief and general quarterly assessment that were designed to determine if/how participants are achieving their goals as outlined in their IEPs, ISPs and CSPs. It was also designed to address any issues or problems participants may have that could impact their participation in the program (such as stress levels and transportation). Included were Likert-scale questions, yes/no questions, and open-ended questions. While the participant-quarterly evaluations were initially designed to provide a separate means of tracking changes in participants' ISP, IEP and CSPs on a quarterly basis, the decision was made by both SGC and Thunder Valley CDC staff members to not include this in the evaluation package. Rather, ISP, IEP and CSPs were evaluated on a quarterly basis to reflect any changes and updates made to these, respectively. Thus, participants' quarterly evaluations are included within updates or modifications made within their respective ISPs, IEPs, and CSPs.

4.2.6 Participant-Early-Exit-Interview

The participant early-exit interview questionnaire form was designed in the event that a participant does not complete the Workforce Development Program. The purpose of this questionnaire was to obtain information on why the participant left the program before achieving

certification. It also asked what Thunder Valley CDC could have done (if anything) to have prevented the participants' early-exit. It asked further what skills the participant may have acquired thus-far.

4.2.7 Participant Post-Evaluation

The participant-post evaluation questionnaire will be administered to participants following their completion of the Workforce Development Program. It will function to determine what specific skills participants learned in the program and will be compared against participants' IEPs, ISPs and CSPs to provide a meaningful and measurable depiction of both program and participant success. The participant post-evaluation also asks what the participant liked or did not like about the program, whether they achieved the goals outlined in their CSP, IEP, and ISPs, and whether they would recommend the program to others.

4.2.8 Participant Post-Evaluation-Quarterly Follow-Up

The participant post-evaluation-quarterly follow-up questionnaire is designed to determine if/how Thunder Valley CDC Workforce Development Program graduates have obtained jobs as result of their participation in the program, and what other related goals they have achieved since program completion. It also asks program graduates for general follow-up information and feedback. The participant post-evaluation-quarterly follow-up will provide a means to track both participants' short- and long-term successes. It is an important measure of whether participants trained in Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program are actually able to obtain jobs in the construction (or other) field following the completion of the

program. It asks whether, through the program, graduates felt better prepared to enter the workforce and keep a job.

4.2.9 Staff Intake Evaluation

The staff intake evaluation was a general questionnaire provided to all staff members at the launch of the Workforce Development Program. Its function was to determine how well Thunder Valley CDC staff members felt prepared to perform their roles within the Thunder Valley CDC, specifically within the Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program. This evaluation allowed staff members to assess the development and progress of the program thus far, and asked whether staff members felt adequately supported by program management. The staff intake evaluation also asked staff members to provide ratings and comments on their individual performance thus far.

4.2.10 Staff Quarterly Evaluation

The staff quarterly evaluations are detailed self-assessments for staff members through which to provide quarterly updates based on task completion, goals achievement, and any problems encountered. They are unique to each position as well as each quarter, and ask staff members to provide such information as participant progress, number of classroom instruction hours participants have received thus far, and participants' average class grade. This form also provides staff members with an opportunity to express any concerns they may have and to provide input or suggestions on how to improve.

4.2.11 Staff Post Evaluation

Staff post-evaluations are self-reported staff questionnaires for staff members to complete at the end of the Workforce Development Program for each cohort. They are intended to allow staff members to reflect on the past ten months, to describe any lessons learned and to provide suggestions for upcoming cohorts. A personal assessment was also provided on both staff members' respective roles within the program as well as those of fellow staff members, and the Program's management and leadership.

4.3 Phase III Deliverables

4.3.1 Participant Program Application Data Analysis

The analysis and report of the participant Program Application was completed and submitted on March 9, 2015. This report gave Thunder Valley CDC staff members and program evaluators an understanding of the make-up of participants in Cohort 1 in terms of demographics, household information, education background, construction experience, employment history, financial information, whether they have identification, and whether they have reliable transportation. Data for this report were derived from the shared cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce into which participants' printed Workforce Development Program application information was uploaded. A report was issued from Salesforce in the form of an excel spreadsheet for evaluation.

For Cohort 1 participants enrolled in the program at the time this analysis was completed, in terms of demographics, participants ranged in age from 18 to 26. They represented six Pine Ridge community districts and their gender make-up was 70% male and 30% female. For household information, 90% of participants identified themselves as "single." They had an

average number of three adults in their household (with a range from one to five). Eighty percent of participants have three or more adults in their household. The average number of children in participants' households is two, with an average of zero to six, with 40% of participants with three or more children in their household. The average number of adults and children in participants' households was six. Also, 70% of participants lived with relatives other than their parents, and 70% rented their current residence. In terms of education, 40% of participants had a high school diploma and "some college" experience, while 30% of participants did not graduate high school. In terms of construction and other job experience, 60% of participants had experience in construction, though 40% of participants had one previous job and 10% of participants had more than one previous job. Their previous employment positions included driver, stocker, laborer and grill master. Their average rate of pay for these jobs was \$9.15 per hour (with a range from \$7.25, which is South Dakota minimum wage), to \$11.00 per hour. Participants' length of previous employment ranged from one to nine months, with an average of 4.2 months. For participants' financial information, most either did not respond to the question (suggesting no income) or answered with "0." Ten percent of participants indicated having an income in the form of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). With regard to checking and savings accounts, 30% of participants had both and 70% had neither. Ninety percent of participants did not have a household budget and 90% of participants did not know their credit scores. Ninety percent of participants had a social security card and 40% of participants had a reliable mode of transportation.

4.3.2 Participant Intake Analysis

The analysis and report of the participant intake evaluations was completed and submitted on March 17, 2015. This report gave Thunder Valley CDC staff members and program evaluators an understanding of participants' motivations for joining the program; how they hoped to benefit from their involvement in the program; how they learned about the program; and more. The seven-question evaluation form was built from document reviews (such as of Thunder Valley CDC's Objective Work Plans). Conversations with Thunder Valley CDC staff members regarding what they hoped to understand about participants upon entering the program also contributed to the development of this evaluation tool, as did conversations about how that information relates to and corresponds with participants' post-evaluations that will be completed when they complete the program. Unlike the participants' individual education plans, individual success plans, and construction skills plans, the intake evaluations were short and general. They were completed by all of the ten individual participants on January 5, 2015, the first day the Workforce Development Program began. The data from this evaluation were entered into the shared, cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce. A report was drawn from the intake evaluation information contained in Salesforce in the form of a spreadsheet with the intake evaluation questions and answers. Of the seven questions in this questionnaire, three of them were open-ended. For analysis, responses to these were consolidated and coded according to related themes. Two of the questions asked participants to select the most appropriate response from a list provided, and one question used a Likert-scale.

The data from the participant intake evaluation revealed that the most important reasons participants joined the program were to find a job that makes them feel good, and to gain valuable job skills. Participants were most excited to learn about construction and sustainable

construction, and to achieve their education-related goals. Participants are kept “on-track” by being focused on their goals and their families. Most participants learned about the program from either someone who works for Thunder Valley CDC, or from friends or family. When asked to describe Thunder Valley CDC and the Workforce Development Program, most of participants’ responses related to skills development. Most participants identified completing the Workforce Development Program as one of their personal goals.

4.3.3 Individual Success Plan Analysis

The first analysis and report of the participants’ individual success plans was completed and submitted on June 25, 2015. This report gave Thunder Valley CDC staff members and program evaluators an understanding of participants’ individual backgrounds, goals, and personal challenges, among other things, with which, the program manager and the participant developed a detailed strategy to use their individual strengths to meet individual goals, and to determine what resources Thunder Valley CDC can provide to address participants’ individual challenges. The ISPs were thus built from extensive program manager-participant interviews as guided by the evaluator-developed ISP template. The information obtained from the ISPs thereby provides important data on both participants as a group as well as individual participants. Understanding participants’ needs and goals for this program, and if/how those goals are being met, provides Thunder Valley CDC with important information on the progress of the program in terms of meeting its goals. The ISPs (with the individual education, and construction skills plans) provide a means of measuring and tracking both program and individual participant status.

The ISPs were completed by all of the 11 participants that were initially enrolled in the Workforce Development Program just after its official January 5, 2015 launch. Two participants,

however, have since dropped the program. The data here therefore reflect the initial 11 participants, all of whom completed (at least partially) the ISP. The final ISP analysis (which will take place at the end of the program for Cohort 1) will re-examine only those participants who completed the program. Those who did not complete it will be examined separately within the final program analysis.

Unlike the participants' intake evaluations, their ISPs are extensive and specific. The data from each ISP were entered into the shared, cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce. A report was drawn from the ISP information contained in Salesforce for each individual participant, and was analyzed and detailed in an ISP report, and summarized here. The ISP report contained data analysis for the entire cohort. Individual reports were drawn from this for program manager and participants' use for tracking trainings, goals achievement, etc. Data from the individual reports were not included in the ISP report, only data on the group as a whole. Questions on the ISP were in the forms of open-ended questions, Likert-scale questions, and multiple choice questions in which participants were asked to select the most appropriate response from a list provided. The responses to the open-ended questions were consolidated and coded according to themes.

Analysis of participants' ISPs revealed the following:

LIVING SITUATION

- At the time of completion of the ISP, most participants lived with their immediate family (either with both of their parents, just their mother or just their father); or with their boyfriend/girlfriend or their boyfriend/girlfriends' family

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- At the time of completion of the ISP, none of the participants were employed outside of the Workforce Development Program. However, nearly 50% were taking classes outside of this program

FINANCIAL INFORMATION and SKILLS

- At the time of completion of the ISP, most participants had some financial skills such as saving on a regular basis, utilizing a debit card and creating a budget. However, most did not have a savings or checking account, or an Individual Development Account (IDA); and no participants knew their credit scores

SUCCESS SKILLS

- Participants were asked to identify from a list that was provided, the skills they possess that will contribute to their success within the Workforce Development Program. There was no definition provided for each skill listed. The top ten skills possessed by participants that will contribute to their success in this program are:

- (1) Excited to learn new things
- (2) Following directions
- (3) Open-minded
- (4) Positive attitude
- (5) Communication
- (6) Interest in personal development
- (7) Enthusiasm to learn new things
- (8) Teamwork/working with others
- (9) Enjoy a challenge
- (10) Ability to accept constructive criticism

EDUCATION SKILLS

- The top most education skills that participants possess are (in order of most frequently identified):

- (1) Computer skills such as typing and word processing
- (2) Use of social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
- (3) Writing skills
- (4) Math skills, such as statistics, algebra or arithmetic

PARTICIPANTS' INTERESTS

- Participants' most common interests include (in order of most frequently identified):

- (1) Sports and exercise
- (2) Family and loved ones
- (3) Art and creativity
- (4) Entertainment (i.e. playing X-box)

DEFINE SUCCESS

- Participants mostly define success in ways that related to the following themes (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Achievement
 - (2) Support myself and my family
 - (3) Happiness
 - (4) Job/Income
 - (5) Personal development
 - (6) “Things” (This category was intended to capture responses that did not relate to basic needs or any of the other categories listed here and included responses such as “Having your own things.”)
 - (7) Basic needs

PLAN AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION

- Participants’ plans following completion of the Workforce Development Program are (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Go back to school
 - (2) Use this experience to further career or other future goals
 - (3) Find a job
 - (4) Find a job in construction
 - (5) Community
 - (6) Work for Thunder Valley
 - (7) Get settled with family
 - (8) Build my and my family’s homes

CHALLENGES THAT COULD PREVENT SUCCESS

- The most frequently identified challenges participants identified as potentially threatening their success in this program are (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Health/medical/accidents
 - (2) “Myself...I’ve got to stay motivated”

CHALLENGES THAT COULD PREVENT GOALS ACHIEVEMENT

- The most frequently identified challenges participants identified as potentially threatening to the achievement of their goals are (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Self-discipline
 - (2) Transportation
 - (3) Self-doubt

- (4) Nothing
- (5) Not passing
- (6) Addiction
- (7) Getting hurt or into trouble

LIFE/SCHOOL BALANCE

- Participants identified the following as the ways in which they will manage the balance of life and school (equally identified):
 - (1) Stay focused on goals
 - (2) Better my family

STRESSORS

- Participants identified the following as among the most common stressors in their lives (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Family issues and relationships
 - (2) Finances
 - (3) Providing for myself and my family

HOW DO YOU MANAGE STRESS?

- Participants identified the following as ways in which they tend to manage their stress (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Keep going
 - (2) Remind myself doing it for family
 - (3) Exercise
 - (4) Listen to music/draw/write

HOW WILL YOU MANAGE THE STRESS OF THIS PROGRAM?

- Participants identified the following as ways in which they will manage the stress associated with involvement in the Workforce Development Program (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Talk to someone
 - (2) It won't cause me stress
 - (3) Keep goal in mind
 - (4) Letting go

WILL STRESS HINDER YOUR SUCCESS?

- “No.” At the time of completion of their ISPs, participants believed that stress will not hinder their success in the Workforce Development Program.

NEEDS

- Among the needs participants identified as necessary or helpful for their success are (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Tutoring
 - (2) Support / resources
 - (3) Child care
 - (4) Further training
 - (5) Counseling
 - (6) Transportation help
 - (7) Addiction help
 - (8) A plan
 - (9) “A chance”

HOW CAN THUNDER VALLEY CDC HELP?

- Among the ways participants identified that Thunder Valley CDC can help them to manage their stress and the stress associated with this program are (in order of most frequently identified):
 - (1) Support
 - (2) “They already do”
 - (3) “Keeping me motivated”

4.3.4 Individual Education Plan Analysis

The first analysis and report of the participants’ individual education plan was completed and submitted on June 25, 2015. This report gave Thunder Valley CDC staff members and program evaluators an understanding of participants’ individual education backgrounds, goals, and personal challenges, among other things, with which, the education coordinator and the participant developed a detailed strategy to use participants’ individual strengths to meet individual education goals, and to determine what resources Thunder Valley CDC can provide to meet participants’ individual education needs. The IEPs were thus built from extensive education coordinator-participant interviews as guided by the evaluator-developed IEP template, and completed by the education coordinator. The information obtained from the IEPs thereby provided important data on both participants as a group comprising Cohort 1, as well as

individual participants. Understanding participants' educational needs and goals for this program, and if/how those needs and goals are being met, provides Thunder Valley CDC with important information on the progress of the program in terms of meeting its goals. The IEP (with the individual success, and construction skills plans) provide a means of measuring and tracking this progress.

Unlike the participants' intake evaluations, their IEPs are extensive and specific. They were completed following the official January 5, 2015 launch of the Workforce Development Program. In contrast to the participants' individual success plans (ISPs, which were completed by all of the 11 initial program participants) the IEPs were completed by ten of the eleven initial participants. Presumably, the participant who did not complete the IEP dropped the program before the official completion of the IEPs. Thus, the data here only reflects those ten participants who were enrolled in the program at the time of IEP completion.

The data from each IEP were entered into the shared, cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce. A report was drawn from the IEP information contained in Salesforce for each individual participant, and was analyzed and detailed in an IEP report, and summarized here. The report contained data analysis for the entire cohort. Individual reports were drawn from this for the education coordinator's and participants' use for tracking, for example, completed trainings and goals achievements. Data from the individual reports were not included in the IEP report, only data on the group as a whole. Questions on the IEP are in the forms of open-ended questions, Likert-scale questions, and multiple choice questions in which participants were asked to select the most appropriate response from a list provided. The responses to the open-ended questions were consolidated and coded according to themes.

Analysis of participants' IEPs revealed the following:

CURRENT COURSEWORK

- 50% of participants are taking classes outside of the Workforce Development program, all at OLC, and mostly part-time. They are taking courses in:
 - 3-credit English I course
 - 3-credit Elementary Algebra course
 - Courses in computer technology (not specified what courses)
 - Not specified
- 100% of the participants who are not currently enrolled in outside classes are preparing for their GED (General Equivalency Diploma) tests. Each of these three participants participates in tutoring sessions at the Pejuta Haka center twice a week.

CURRENT LEVEL OF EDUCATION

- 70% of participants possess a high school diploma
- 50% indicated that they have a high school diploma and have completed some college coursework
- 30% of participants indicated that they have not completed their high school diploma. However, 100% of those individuals are currently preparing for their GED

LAST EDUCATOR, ROLE, AGENCY, INVOLVEMENT, AND LEVEL ACHIEVED

Of the participants who have received their high school diplomas:

- Two were received from Pine Ridge High School (in 2010 and 2014)
- Four were received from Little Wound High School (in 2007, 2010 and 2013)
- Of the three participants who did not graduate high school, two of them attended Little Wound High School and one attended Pine Ridge High School prior to dropping-out
- Of the participants who have taken some prior college coursework prior to the start of the Workforce Development program, four of them had been enrolled at Oglala Lakota College and one had been enrolled at South East Community College in Lincoln, Nebraska
- Of those participants who have taken college coursework, three of them enrolled in college courses the semester following their high school graduation
- Of those two participants who did not enroll in college courses the semester immediately following their graduation, one participant attended college one year later, and one participant enrolled two years later

EDUCATION PREFERENCES

- 50% of participants' responses related to completing their coursework

- 20% of participants' responses related to completing the Workforce Development Program," "Interested in the construction field," "Working towards GED," and "Not sure"

EDUCATION SKILLS and ABILITIES

- 40% of participants' responses related to the theme of "Hard working/good worker"
- 30% of participants' responses related to "Focus, determined, ambitious" theme

EDUCATION STRENGTHS

- 80% of participants' responses related to "Focus/determination/motivation" theme
- 50% of participants' responses related to the "Hard working/reliable" theme
- 40% of participants' responses related to the "Attendance" and "Attitude/personality" theme
- 30% of participants' responses related to the "Other" and "Learning" themes

MOTIVATIONS

- 100% of participants' responses related to the "Motivation/focus/self-determination/ambition" theme
- 30% of participants' responses related to participants' specific motivations such as "shows a lot of enthusiasm about the Workforce Development Program and also about his LTG [long-term goal] in attaining his AA [Associates Degree] in Indian Law."
- 30% of participants' responses related to the "Interest/enthusiasm/intelligence" theme

LEARNING STYLE

- With regard to participants' learning styles, the IEPs indicate that most of the participants are visual or hands-on learners, or both

TEND TO ACT IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS

- 60% left the space blank
- 30% of participants' responses related to participants' comfort-levels in social situations and the theme of "Participation/willingness to ask questions"
- 20% of participants' responses related to the themes of "Attitude/personality," "On task," and "Made improvements/progress"

EDUCATION

Current Long Term Goals

- 60% of participants: "Obtain college degree"
- 20% of participants' responses related to the "Other" category

- 20% of participants responded that they were “unsure” of their long-term education goals

Current Short Term Goals:

- 70% of participants’ responses related to the “Complete and pass the Workforce Development Program” theme
- 40% of participants’ responses related to the “Complete and pass college courses” theme

EDUCATION RESOURCES

80% of participants:

- The National Career Readiness Certificate Program
- Lakota Federal Credit Union/Lakota Funds
- OST Partnership for Housing IDA Program

60% of participants:

- Local spiritual leaders
- Family Restoration training
- Working With Traditions program

50% of participants:

- The TERO program

40% of participants:

- Fitness centers at both Pine Ridge and Kyle
- Oglala Sioux Tribe Vocational Rehabilitation Program

30% of participants:

- GED tutoring at the Pejuta Haka center

10% of participants:

- Diabetes Prevention- IHS program

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

- 100% of participants were offered and successfully completed CPR/First Aid Training and received their certifications
- 100% of participants took part in a traditional sweat
- 80% of participants completed a lesson in Applied Technology- Electricity- Work Keys at the National Career Readiness

- 10% of participants: Other: These include; a preparatory college math class; a Liberation Walk; and GED tutoring and testing. On one of the GED participants' IEPs the Education Coordinator noted that she "spoke with GED Tutor Albert Two Bears- Pejuta Haka- (the participant) is progressing well. She is almost ready to take her GED test at this point."
- 18% of participants quit the program
- 27% have considered quitting the program

SOCIAL SKILLS

- 40% of participants: "Asks questions" and "Respectful/Polite"
- 30% of participants: "Interest/Dedication" and "Social/Talkative"
- 20% of participants: "Quiet," "Gets along with peers and staff," "Academic potential/quick learner," "Pleasant personality," "Attendance/Punctuality," and "Personal growth"
- 10% of participants: "Focus/stays on-task," "Passive/moody," "Leadership," "Attitude," and "Independent"

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

- The average number of days participants were absent from class is 3.6 days, or 6% of the overall program days since it began. The range of absences were from as low as one day, to as high as seven days
- No participants in this cohort have been present 100% of the time
- Participants have been late to class 8.3% of program days (or five times out of 60 total days)
- Participants have left class early on 20% of program days (or 12 times overall out of 60 total days)
- 30% of participants always called when they were going to be late or absent
- 40% sometimes called when they were going to be late or absent
- Participants tended to be late or absent due to illness, a family tragedy, lack of transportation, having no babysitter for their children, or inclement weather
- For the participant who seemed to regularly have troubles getting to Thunder Valley, the education coordinator went to pick him up three times during this quarter

4.3.5 Construction Skills Plan Analysis

The first analysis and report of the participants' construction skills plan was completed and submitted on June 25, 2015. This report gave Thunder Valley CDC staff members and program evaluators an understanding of participants' individual backgrounds, goals, and interests, as they relate to construction and sustainable construction. With these, the lead

construction trainer and the participant developed a detailed strategy to use their individual strengths to determine what types of construction career or jobs they would like to obtain following the completion of this program. The CSPs were thus built from extensive lead construction trainer-participant interviews as guided by the evaluator-developed CSP template. The data obtained from the CSPs thereby provided important data on both the group as Cohort 1, as well as individual participants. Understanding participants' needs, backgrounds and goals as they relate to construction, and if/how those goals are being met, provides Thunder Valley CDC with important information on the progress of the program in terms of meeting its goals. The CSP (with the individual success and individual education plans) provides a means of measuring and tracking this progress.

Like the participants' individual success plans and individual education plans, their construction skills plans are extensive and specific. Unlike the participants' individual success plans (ISPs), as of April 1, 2015, the CSPs were completed by eight of the 11 participants. It seems that two of the three participants who did not complete the CSPs were still enrolled in the Workforce Development Program as of April 1, 2015, while one of the participants dropped the program within the first few weeks of its January start. Thus, the data here only reflects those participants who were enrolled in the program at the time of CSP completion (including the two participants who did not complete the CSP, though presumably are still involved in the program).

The data from each CSP were entered into the shared, cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce. A report was drawn from the CSP information contained in Salesforce for each individual participant, and was analyzed and detailed in a CSP report, and summarized here. The report contained data analysis for the entire cohort. Individual reports were drawn from this for the lead construction trainer's and participants' use for tracking

trainings and goals achievement. Data from the individual reports were not included in the CSP report, only data on the group as a whole. Questions on the CSP are in the forms of open-ended questions, Likert-scale questions, and multiple-choice questions in which participants were asked to select the most appropriate response from a list provided. The responses to the open-ended questions were consolidated and coded according to themes.

Analysis of participants' CSPs revealed the following:

CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE

- 60% of participants had no experience in construction
- Of the 20% of participants who indicated that they do have construction experience, each had approximately 3-6 months-worth of experience

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE / KNOWLEDGE

- 30% of participants had no experience or knowledge in sustainable construction
- 30% indicated that they had "Some" experience or knowledge of sustainable construction (through related coursework, training, personal interest, etc.)
- 10% of participants had "Advanced" experience or knowledge in sustainable construction (obtained through related coursework, training, personal interest, etc.)

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

- 60% of participants had no sustainable construction skills at the time they completed their CSPs
- Of the 30% participants who responded to this question, 10% indicated that they possessed experience in strawbale/cob; 10% indicated that they possessed experience in structured insulated pane; and 10% indicated that they possessed experience in the "Other" category

DESIRED LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE

- 50% would like to obtain Mid-Level experience
- 20% would like to achieve an Advanced level of experience in sustainable construction
- 10% of participants would like to achieve a "Basic" experience level in sustainable construction

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION TYPE: The "type of construction experience" participants had:

- 30% selected the "Other" category from the pick-list provided

- 20% identified having experience in roofing
- 10% in residential construction

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS: With regard to construction materials, 30% indicated that they had experience with interior or exterior paint, and 30% indicated that they had experience with flooring (including tile, carpet, or hardware flooring)

- 10% of participants indicated that they had experience with concrete
- 10% of participants indicated that they had experience with dry wall

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION TOOLS: With regard to participants' previous use of or experience with construction tools:

- 70% had experience with electric tools such as a drill, saw, or nail gun
- 10% had used construction hand tools
- 10% had used a paint sprayer

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS: With regard to participants' construction skills (as obtained either directly through job-related construction experience, or indirectly through the use of measuring devices, in other circumstances):

- 60% of participants had experience taking measurements
- 20% of participants had construction skills related to the "Other" category
- 10% identified as their construction skills exterior finishing, structural framing, and window/door installation

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION SAFETY: With regard to experience with construction safety:

- 50% indicated that they did have experience with construction safety

Of those participants who indicated having experience with construction safety:

- 20% had experience with personal protective equipment
- 10% had experience with a fire extinguisher, safe working conditions, CPR, OSHA, or "Other"

PARTICIPANT'S WORK EXPERIENCE AND DESIRED SKILLS

HAVE EXPERIENCE 1: For the 30% of participants who indicated that they had construction experience:

- One participant worked as a laborer for the Heil Mechanical Company where he/she learned a number of skills including core drilling, pipe measuring, and copper cutting
- With regard to what this individual liked best about this experience, he/she stated that, "It taught how to work in a construction site, being polite and friendly with

other workers in the work area, and it furthered my knowledge in the construction industry. Mostly I liked who I worked with and many of the new things that they taught me how to do in the plumbing area.”

- With regard to what this individual liked least about this position, he/she stated, “When I was expecting to get paid from the work site and I didn't and so I had to find and pay someone for a ride to go to Rapid City to pick up my check.”

HAVE EXPERIENCE 2: 10% of participants had a second form of construction experience:

- The participant who had a second form of experience had experience pouring concrete. What he indicated as liking the best about this position was that he “learned something [he] didn't know.” With regard to what this participant liked the least about this position, he responded, “Nothing really, just that it's messy.”

HAVE EXPERIENCE 3: 10% of participants had a third form of construction experience:

- The participant who had a third form of experience had experience with grounds-keeping through which he did exterior and interior maintenance. What this participant indicated as liking best about this position was that “I was my own boss, me reporting to me. And the employer.” What this participant indicated as liking the least about this position was that “I was the only worker there for a month.”

DO NOT HAVE EXPERIENCE: For those participants who indicated that they do not have construction experience, they were asked to identify who they would want to work for, what they would want to do, what skills they would like to learn, and what skills they would not be interested in learning.

- 40% of participants responded that they would like to “work for Thunder Valley or a company that works with sustainable housing.” 20% indicated that there were not any skills they did not want to learn, while 10% of participants each did not respond and one mentioned roofing as a skill he/she would not be interested in learning.

4.3.6 Staff Intake Analysis

The analysis and report of the staff intake evaluation was completed and submitted on April 13, 2015. Staff members complete these evaluations at the start of each cohort in the Workforce Development Program. These staff intake evaluations are intended to give the evaluators an understanding of staff members' motivations for joining the program; how well

they feel supported by the program's management and leadership; the degrees to which they believe in the mission of the program; and their opinions on how the program is progressing thus-far. The 16-question evaluation form was built from document reviews (such as of Thunder Valley CDC's Objective Work Plans), and conversations with Thunder Valley CDC staff members regarding their individual roles within the Workforce Development program. Like the participants' intake evaluations, the staff intake evaluations are short and general. They were completed by three Thunder Valley CDC staff members, including the Workforce Development program manager, education coordinator and lead construction trainer, and were completed at the start of the program, during the first week in January, 2015. Once completed, the data from this evaluation were entered into the shared, cloud-based computer data-management system, Salesforce. A report was drawn from the staff intake evaluation information contained in Salesforce in the form of a spreadsheet with the evaluation question and answers. The evaluation included 16 Likert-scale questions and three open-ended questions. Responses to the open-ended questions were consolidated and categorized according to theme. Analysis of the staff intake evaluations revealed the following:

- 100% of staff respondents agreed or highly agreed with the statement that they are “satisfied with how the Workforce Development Program has developed up to that point” (at the official launch of the program, in January 2015)
- 67% of staff members agreed or highly agreed with the statement that, “As a Thunder Valley instructor, I am satisfied with the training and preparation I have received from Thunder Valley in terms of being able to adequately perform my job duties,” while 33% member neither agreed nor disagreed
- 100% of staff members either agreed or highly agreed with the statement that “I think the mission and the goals of the Workforce Development Program are realistic and feasible”
- 100% of staff members either agreed or highly agreed with the statement that “I think Thunder Valley is doing a good job of managing its funding and utilizing its resources”

- 100% of staff members either agreed or highly agreed with the statement that “I feel supported by the management and leadership at Thunder Valley”
- 100% of staff members either agreed or highly agreed with the statement that “I am satisfied with my performance in my position with Thunder Valley so far”
- 100% of staff members agreed with the statement that, “I am excited and inspired by the Workforce Development and Sustainable Homeownership programs at Thunder Valley”
- 100% of staff members highly agreed with the statement that, “I believe I make a valuable contribution to the Workforce Development Program at Thunder Valley”
- 67% of staff members agreed with the statement that “There are no changes I would make to the way the Thunder Valley Workforce Development Program has been developed and implemented so far,” and 33% neither agreed nor disagreed
- Only one of the three staff members completing this evaluation offered additional comments or questions. The staff member commented that, “The Workforce Development program is just starting. I am sure as time progresses my answers to these questions may change as well. As for the support and my position at Thunder Valley I am completely satisfied at the moment.”

4.3.7 Staff Quarterly Analysis

Likely due to staff turnover, no Thunder Valley CDC staff members completed their quarterly evaluation, so there was no analysis for this deliverable.

4.4 Phase IV Deliverables

4.4.1 Participant Quarterly Analysis

Rather than do a quarterly evaluation for participants as well as regular updates to their ISPs, IEPs, and CSPs, Thunder Valley CDC and Sweet Grass Consulting staff members decided not to have participants complete quarterly evaluations. Rather, their regularly revisited ISPs, IEPs, and CSPs would be reanalyzed and re-reported on a quarterly basis to serve this purpose.

4.4.2 Individual Success Plan Analysis-Quarter 2

The second analysis/report of the participants' individual success plans was completed and submitted on September 16, 2015. This report follows the previous individual success plan (ISP) report, which covered the dates from the start of the program on January 5, 2015 to the end of the first quarter on March 31, 2015. Thus, this report covers the dates from the start of the second quarter of the Workforce Development Program, on April 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015.

For the initial completion of participants' ISPs, the program manager for Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program sat individually with each participant to develop a unique ISP reflecting the needs and interests of the individual participant. The quarterly follow-ups were intended to be completed the same way, with the program manager meeting individually with participants and together reviewing their ISPs, and updating or modifying them where necessary. There were no updates or changes made to participants' ISPs during Quarter 2. However, due to participant turn-over, two new participants started the program during this time and ISPs were created for them individually. Their respective ISPs were created between the dates of June 3 and June 29, 2015. One of those has since withdrawn from the program. There were ten participants enrolled in the Workforce Development Program during Quarter 2, including the two new participants, and excluding the four participants who quit the program before the start of the second quarter. The data here therefore reflects the eight participants whose ISPs were created in Quarter 1 who remained in the program in Quarter 2, combined with those created for the two new participants.

Due likely to staff turnover during Quarter 2, ISPs were not updated to the extent hoped for by evaluators. The lack of updated ISP data for Quarter 2 makes it difficult to accurately ascertain the extent of participants' goals-achievements as related to their ISPs in comparison to

Quarter 1. While the ISP data for the new participants has slightly altered the data within the overall ISP responses, it does not seem to have done so significantly enough to warrant further examination of any data change at this time. The next quarterly report, as well as the final report for Cohort 1 will further detail growth and change within participants' ISPs.

QUARTER 2 ISP DATA SUMMARY

LIVING SITUATION

- (1) Live with immediate family: 40%
- (2) Live with extended family: 30%
- (3) Live with partner: 20%
- (4) Live alone: 10%

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- (1) Savings account: 40%
- (2) Checking account: 10%
- (3) IDA: 20%
- (4) Know credit score: 0%

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- No change in participants' current employment status, as 100% are currently employed with Thunder Valley in the Workforce Development Program

CURRENT FINANCIAL LEVEL

- No change from the Quarter 1 in participants' financial levels

FINANCIAL SKILLS

- Have financial skills: 80%
- Do not have financial skills: 20%

SKILLS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS

- (1) Communication skills: 90%
- (2) Enthusiasm to learn new things: 90%
- (3) Teamwork/working with others: 90%
- (4) Self-confidence: 90%
- (5) Following directions: 90%
- (6) Positive attitude: 90%
- (7) Open-minded: 90%

- (8) Ability to accept constructive criticism: 80%
- (9) Decision-making: 70%
- (10) Interest in personal development: 70%
- (11) Listening: 70%
- (12) Sense of humor: 70%
- (13) Excited to learn new things: 70%
- (14) Enjoy a challenge: 70%
- (15) Interest in helping the community: 60%
- (16) Interest in helping the environment: 60%
- (17) Interest in sustainable construction: 60%
- (18) Creativity: 60%
- (19) Curiosity: 50%
- (20) Independence: 50%

EDUCATION SKILLS

- (1) Computer skills (typing and word processing): 70%
- (2) Social media skills: 60%
- (3) Writing skills: 50%
- (4) Research (academic/ field research): 30%
- (5) Analytical skills: 20%
- (6) Public speaking skills: 20%
- (7) Networking skills: 20%
- (8) Math skills: 20%
- (9) Creating and managing websites: 10%
- (10) Other: 10%
- (11) Planning skills: 10%

INTERESTS

- (1) "Sports and exercise": 60%
- (2) "Family and loved ones": 50%
- (3) "Art and creativity": 50%
- (4) "Work and service": 30%
- (5) "Entertainment": 20%
- (6) "Other": 20%
- (7) "Learning": 20%
- (8) "Social": 10%
- (9) "Nature:" 10%

DEFINE SUCCESS

- (1) "Achievement": 60%
- (2) "Support myself and my family": 40%
- (3) "Happiness": 40%
- (4) "Job/income": 30%
- (5) "Personal development": 10%

- (6) "Basic needs": 10%
- (7) "Things:" 10%

PLAN AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION

- (1) "Go back to school": 60%
- (2) "Find a job / job in Construction": 50%
- (3) "Save Money": 30%
- (4) "Use this experience to further career or other future goals": 20%
- (5) "Work for Thunder Valley": 20%
- (6) "Community": 10%
- (7) "Build my and my family's homes": 10%

CHALLENGES THAT COULD PREVENT SUCCESS

- (1) "Myself...I've got to stay motivated": 40%
- (2) "Health/medical/accidents": 30%
- (3) "Nothing": 10%
- (4) "Fear": 10%
- (5) "Personal problems": 10%
- (6) "Legal situation": 10%
- (7) "Transportation": 10%

CHALLENGES THAT COULD PREVENT GOALS ACHIEVEMENT

- (1) "Self-discipline": 50%
- (2) "Transportation": 20%
- (3) "Nothing": 10%
- (4) "Not making it to work or class": 10%
- (5) "Not passing": 10%
- (6) "Self-doubt": 10%
- (7) "Getting hurt or into trouble": 10%

LIFE/SCHOOL BALANCE

- (1) "There's time/ figure it out as it comes": 30%
- (2) "Support": 30%
- (3) "Try not to let it interfere with home life": 20%
- (4) "Knowing that I'm working to better my family": 10%
- (5) "Good at multi-tasking": 10%
- (6) "Stick to a schedule": 10%

STRESSORS

- (1) "Providing for myself and my family" 30%
- (2) "Finances": 30%
- (3) "Family issues and relationships": 20%
- (4) "Don't have much stress": 20%

- (5) "Legal issues": 10%
- (6) "Health issues": 10%
- (7) "Grades": 10%

NEEDS

- (1) "Tutoring": 60%
- (2) "Further training": 30%
- (3) "Childcare": 20%
- (4) "Support": 20%
- (5) "Counseling": 20%
- (6) "A Plan": 10%
- (7) "Resources": 10%

HOW CAN THUNDER VALLEY CDC HELP?

- (1) "They already do": 30%
- (2) "Support": 30%
- (3) "Keeping me motivated": 20%
- (4) "Learning": 10%
- (5) "Offer tips": 10%
- (6) "I don't know": 10%

HOW DO YOU MANAGE STRESS?

- (1) "Keep going": 30%
- (2) "Exercise": 30%
- (3) "Listen to music, draw write": 30%
- (4) "Letting things go": 20%
- (5) "Spend time with my family": 20%
- (6) "Spend time alone": 10%
- (7) "I have support": 10%
- (8) "Work": 10%

HOW WILL YOU MANAGE THE STRESS OF THIS PROGRAM?

- (1) "It won't cause me stress": 30%
- (2) "Letting go": 20%
- (3) "Talk to someone": 20%
- (4) "Keep goal in mind": 10%
- (5) "Family support": 10%
- (6) "Exercise": 10%

4.4.3 Individual Education Plan Analysis-Quarter 2

The second analysis/report of the participants' individual education plans was completed and submitted on September 16, 2015. This report follows the previous individual education plan (IEP) report, which covered the dates from the start of the program on January 5, 2015, to the end of the first quarter on March 31, 2015. Thus, this report covers the dates from the start of the second quarter of the Workforce Development Program, on April 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015.

For the initial completion of participants' IEPs, the education coordinator for Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program sat individually with each participant to develop a unique ISP reflecting the needs and interests of the individual participant. The quarterly follow-ups were intended to be completed the same way, with the education coordinator meeting individually with participants and together reviewing their IEPs, and updating or modifying them where necessary. There were no updates or changes made to participants' IEPs during Quarter 2. However, due to participant turn-over, two new participants started the program during this time and IEPs were created for them individually. Their respective IEPs were created between the dates of June 3 and June 29, 2015. One of those participants has since withdrawn from the program. There were ten participants enrolled in the Workforce Development Program during Quarter 2, including the two new participants, and excluding the four participants who quit the program before the start of the second quarter. The data here therefore reflects the eight participants whose IEPs were created in Quarter 1 who remained in the program in Quarter 2, combined with those created for the two new participants.

Due likely to staff turnover during Quarter 2, IEPs were not updated to the extent hoped for by evaluators. The lack of updated IEP data for Quarter 2 makes it difficult to accurately ascertain the extent of participants' goals-achievements as related to their IEPs in comparison to

Quarter 1. While the IEP data for the new participants has slightly altered the data within the overall IEP responses, it does not seem to have done so significantly enough to warrant further examination of any data change at this time. The next quarterly report, as well as the final report for Cohort 1 will further detail growth and change within participants' IEPs.

QUARTER 2 IEP DATA SUMMARY

CURRENT COURSEWORK

- Taking outside classes: 20%
- Not taking outside classes: 80%

CURRENT LEVEL OF EDUCATION

- High school diploma: 60%
- No high school diploma: 40%
- Of those with no high school diploma who are taking GED preparation courses: 100%
- Participants with a high school diploma and some college coursework: 30%

LAST EDUCATOR, ROLE, AGENCY, INVOLVEMENT, AND LEVEL ACHIEVED

- Little Wound High School – graduated: 40%
- Little Wound High School – not graduated: 30%
- Pine Ridge High School – graduated: 10%
- Pine Ridge High School – not graduated: 10%
- No Response: 10%

EDUCATION PREFERENCES

- (1) “Focused on coursework and education goals”: 56%
- (2) “Focused on completing the Workforce Development Program in the fall”: 20%
- (3) No Response: 20%
- (4) “Interested in the construction field”: 10%
- (5) “Personal qualities” (Respect for peers, staff and self, attendance, punctuality): 10%

EDUCATION SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- (1) “Focus, determined, ambitious”: 50%
- (2) “Eager to learn”: 30%
- (3) “Punctual, reliable, patient”: 20%
- (4) “Hard working/good worker”: 20%
- (5) “Other”: 20%

- (6) "Academics": 10%

EDUCATION STRENGTHS

- (1) "Focus/determination/motivation": 60%
- (2) "Hard working/reliable": 40%
- (3) "Attendance": 20%
- (4) "Attitude/personality": 20%
- (5) "Learning": 20%
- (6) "Other": 10%
- (7) "Confidence": 10%
- (8) No Response: 10%

MOTIVATIONS

- (1) "Motivation/focus/self-determination/ambition": 70%
- (2) "Interest/enthusiasm/intelligence": 30%
- (3) "Motivated to get paid": 10%
- (4) "Motivated by family": 10%
- (5) "Weaknesses/needs": 10%
- (6) No Response: 10%

LEARNING STYLE

- Visual learners: 50%
- Visual and hands-on learners: 40%
- No Response: 10%

TEND TO ACT IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS

- (1) No Response: 60%
- (2) "Respectful": 20%
- (3) "Made improvements/progress": 20%
- (4) "Participation/willing to ask questions": 10%
- (5) "Keep to myself": 10%

EDUCATION GOALS

Current Long Term Goals

- (1) "Education": 80%
- (2) "Job": 10%
- (3) "Work for Thunder Valley": 10%
- (4) No Response: 10%

Current Short Term Goals:

- (1) "Complete and pass the Workforce Development Program": 50%

- (2) "Complete and pass college courses": 30%
- (3) No Response: 20%
- (4) "Receive GED": 10%

EDUCATION RESOURCES

- (1) IDA program: 90%
- (2) CPR training/certification: 90%
- (3) National Career Readiness Certificate Program: 60%
- (4) Spiritual leader: 60%
- (5) Family Restoration trainings: 60%
- (6) Working With Traditions: 50%
- (7) TERO: 40%
- (8) GED classes: 30%
- (9) Vocational Rehabilitation training: 30%
- (10) Fitness Center memberships: 30%
- (11) Diabetes Prevention training: 10%
- (12) No Response: 20%

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

- Traditional sweat: 80%
- Applied Technology- electricity-work keys: 80%

SOCIAL SKILLS

- (1) "Gets along with peers and staff": 50%
- (2) "Interest/ dedication": 30%
- (3) "Asks questions": 30%
- (4) "Respectful/polite": 30%
- (5) "Social/outgoing/talkative": 20%
- (6) "Communication": 20%
- (7) "Personal growth:" 20%
- (8) "Academic potential/ quick learner": 10%
- (9) "Attitude": 10%
- (10) "Independent": 10%
- (11) No Response: 10%

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

- No updates were made here for Quarter 2.

4.4.4 Construction Skills Plan Analysis-Quarter 2

The second analysis and report of the participants' construction skills plans was completed and submitted on September 16, 2015. This report follows the previous construction skills plan (CSP) report, which covered the dates from the start of the program on January 5, 2015, to the end of the first quarter on March 31, 2015. Thus, this report covers the dates from the start of the second quarter of the Workforce Development Program, on April 1, 2015, to June 30, 2015.

For the initial completion of participants' CSPs, the lead construction trainer for Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program sat individually with each participant to develop a unique CSP reflecting the needs and interests of the individual participant. The quarterly follow-ups were intended to be completed the same way, with the lead construction trainer meeting individually with participants and together reviewing their CSPs, and updating or modifying them where necessary. There were no updates or changes made to participants' CSPs during Quarter 2. However, due to participant turn-over, two new participants started the program during this time and CSPs were created for them individually. Their respective CSPs were created between the dates of June 3 and June 29, 2015. One of those has since withdrawn from the program. There were ten participants enrolled in the Workforce Development Program during Quarter 2 (including the two new participants, and excluding the four participants who quit the program before the start of the second quarter). The data here therefore reflects the eight participants whose CSPs were created in Quarter 1 who remained in the program in Quarter 2, combined with those created for the two new participants.

Due likely to staff turnover during Quarter 2, CSPs were not updated to the extent hoped for by evaluators. The lack of updated CSP data for Quarter 2 makes it difficult to accurately

ascertain the extent of participants' goals-achievements as related to their CSPs in comparison to Quarter 1. While the CSP data for the new participants has slightly altered the data within the overall CSP responses, it does not seem to have done so significantly enough to warrant further examination of any data change at this time. The next quarterly report, as well as the final report for Cohort 1 will further detail growth and change within participants' CSPs.

QUARTER 2 CSP DATA SUMMARY:

CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE

- Have construction experience: 30% (100% of these have 3-6 months-worth of experience)
- Do not have construction experience: 70%

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Basic (3-6 months full-time with no advanced training): 90%
- No response: 10%

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE / KNOWLEDGE

- No experience or knowledge in sustainable construction: 40%
- Some experience or knowledge of sustainable construction: 30%
- Advanced experience or knowledge of sustainable construction: 20%
- No response: 10%

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

- No response: 80%
- None: 10%
- Yes: 10% identified their experience in sustainable construction as lying within the "Other" category

DESIRED LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE

- Mid-level: 60%
- Advanced: 30%
- Basic: 10%

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION TYPE

- No response: 50%
- "Roofing": 20%

- “Other”: 20%
- “Carpentry”: 10%
- “Plumbing”: 10%
- “Residential construction”: 10%

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

- Flooring (including tile, carpet, or hardware flooring): 40%
- Interior or exterior paint: 20%
- Concrete: 20%
- Drywall: 20%
- Insulation: 10%
- Sheet rock: 10%
- “Other”: 10%
- No Response: 20%

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

- Taking measurements: 50%
- “Other”: 20%
- Interior finishing: 10%
- Exterior finishing: 10%
- Structural framing: 10%
- Window and/or door installations: 10%
- No response: 20%.

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION TOOLS

- Electric tools (drill, saw, or nail gun): 80%
- Construction hand tools: 20%
- Paint sprayer: 10%
- No response: 10%

EXPERIENCE CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

- Have: 80% (safe working environments, fire extinguishers, PPE, OSHA, CPR and “Other”)
- No response: 20%

HAVE EXPERIENCE

- Yes: 60%
- No: 40%

DO NOT HAVE EXPERIENCE

- Would like to ‘Work for Thunder Valley or a company that works with sustainable housing; Would like to work for [Lead Construction Trainer]: 40%

- No skills they don't want to learn: 20%

4.4.5 Staff Quarterly Analysis-Quarter 2

Likely due to staff turnover, no Thunder Valley CDC staff members completed their quarterly evaluation, so there was no analysis for this deliverable.

4.4.6 Evaluation Analysis: Three-Month Progress Report

Like the participant quarterly evaluation, this report was determined to not be included among the deliverables for this evaluation. With the regularly updated and quarterly reported ISPs, IEPs, and CSPs, the information that would be captured in the three-month progress report was determined to likely be redundant. With the absence of both the three- and the six-month progress reports, the final program will need to be slightly more extensive than was initially planned.

4.4.7 Evaluation Analysis: Six-Month Progress Report

Like the participant quarterly evaluation and the three-month progress report, this report was determined to not be included among the deliverables for this evaluation. With the regularly updated and quarterly reported ISPs, IEPs, and CSPs, the information that would be captured in the six-month progress report was determined to likely be redundant. With the absence of both the three- and the six-month progress reports, therefore, the final program report will need to be slightly more extensive than was initially planned.

4.5 Participant Observation and Fieldwork

4.5.1 Focus Group Data Analysis Report: Summary of Findings

- **Work has been slow** “Because we don’t have that much stuff to do.” Referring to the delayed building contract and engineering plans that in-turn delayed the building of the new house.
 - “They’re finding us things to do...there’s still stuff to do but we’ve been waiting on materials and stuff to finish up on...”
 - “It (the new house) was supposed to start in April, then they pushed it back to July and August now. We don’t know if it’s going to be next month or the month after that, so.”
 - “They’ve been finding other stuff for us to do throughout the day like we built that chicken coop; we painted the sheds.”
 - Participants have also been involved in the interior finishing of a housing unit that will soon provide additional office space for Thunder Valley CDC staff.
- **Some of the construction skills participants have learned so far:**
 - Include tiling and plaster
 - Classwork in the first couple of months included:
 - “Construction safety and sustainable construction methods, techniques and materials. We learned about all that stuff that this is...and learned about sustainable construction.”
 - “There’s a lot of stuff that we didn’t know [that] will be useful in other construction jobs, bigger construction jobs.”
 - “IDP and all that, and time-management, and learned about all that stuff too...First Aid...”
- **Original program end-date for the participants who started in January has been pushed back** from October to December, 2015 due to delays in the construction project. The remaining participants in Cohort 1 (those that were present since the program launch in January – of which there were 5 in this Focus Group) were scheduled to be done with the program in October 2015.
 - “So when after this first part of the program ends, they were talking about keeping us on throughout December.”
 - “Cause just in case those houses go up the program ends, we’ll still be able to help finish until the next group of participants start. So that’s pretty good to hear.”

- The participants who started the program late to fill the spots left by the original participants who did not complete the program will “Be there at the start of the program, so I think they’re going to go with the other program.”
- “They’re going to go with them and at that time the new people are going to come in [for Cohort 2].”
- **Has it been hard catching up?**
 - “A little...I had a little bit of construction in my background. This is only, like, three weeks.”
 - The participants who were not in the program since January had only been involved at the time of the Focus Group for 2-3 weeks.
- **Thunder Valley’s Goals** to address the housing shortage, provide housing and jobs, build capacity in sustainable construction, etc. Are these goals being met?
 - “They’re on their way.” “I think they’re doing pretty well.”
- **Benefits of Sustainability:**
 - “Save people a lot of money. People who have low income, too, that’ll be helpful for them.” The environment? “Yeah, that too.”
- **Does the program work?**
 - “Yeah. I think it works.”
- **Will Thunder Valley CDC address their goals?**
 - “I’m hoping they do.”
- **Anything you would change?**
 - “Get paid more.”
- **How are the staff doing?**
 - “We hardly see the staff over there it’s just on big program events we have but most of the time we’re here.” This participant is referring to the housing unit they are finishing up that will provide additional office space for Thunder Valley CDC staff.
 - “And the staff we’re around is [the lead construction trainer] and [assistant construction trainer] and them. They’re pretty cool.”
- **Do you have enough support from the staff?**
 - “Yeah.”
- **Regarding the participants who quit the program:**
 - “There was ten of us for a couple of months for a while out of that 10, 5 of us quit.”

- **Anything that Thunder Valley could have done to have kept them here?**
 - “Not really no.” “They saw all the money they had saved up in the IDA account and just jumped at that”
 - “[one participant] had a little bit of trouble with our old Education Coordinator. Then that Coordinator quit too about a month after that.”
- **What’s good about the program?**
 - “Some of those people that came from the college they saw our books and they said they used the same books.” This seems to validate the education and training participants are receiving from Thunder Valley CDC.
- **Who does this program benefit?**
 - The community, participants’ families
- **Are the cultural components important?**
 - Does it make the program more effective? “Yeah, I think it kind of makes it look good on us,” More...personal? “Yeah.”
- **Will the program help bring people back to the reservation?**
 - “After it’s more developed, after there’s more...Like, after the house is built...”
- **Anything you would change?**
 - “I think some of the other stuff other than construction we could do without. I don’t think it all applies to everything, so...like uh, I guess all the, kind of, counseling type things, I don’t think that really applies to everyone.”
 - Do you think maybe they should just make it as an option for people who feel they need or want it and not make it for everybody?
 - “Yeah. I don’t know if it would work that way though cause if they did they might think no one would do it, so I think that’s why they made it for everyone...I don’t know.” Maybe they didn’t want to single people out? “Oh yeah, probably that, too.”
- **Does this program provide a model for community development?**
 - “It will.” “Maybe not right now, but once we get started and they see houses going up, I think it would.”
 - “Yeah... but as soon as they see construction and houses going up, [the program will] be more respected.”

4.5.2 Staff Interview Data Analysis Report: Summary of Findings

- **Reservation issues that inspired the creation of Thunder Valley CDC**
 - “Wanting more for their children, wanting more than what we had... Wanting them to be safe, wanting them to have health – a healthier lifestyle.”
 - “Grass roots media, discussions, things of what we wanted, how do you see, uh, how would you – what kind of community would you... want your children to grow up in kind of discussion, you know, and what would you want in that community, what would you need...”
- **Program Attributes – Cultural and Spiritual Components**

When asked what makes Thunder Valley CDC’s programs different from other community development efforts, staff members highlighted the cultural and spiritual elements of Thunder Valley CDC’s programs and stated that, for example, “I think our culture is a big part of that. That [culture] is in itself community. Because anything cultural, anything spiritual involves the community... It makes it that much stronger.” Cultural components are included within the programs of Thunder Valley in a way that is consistent with everyday life, such as an emphasis on belonging. “A lot of our traditions,” explained the education coordinator, “are part of everyday stuff... [it] brings out that community sense. That everybody belongs, everybody is part of this, everybody has ownership in this.”

A number of cultural and spiritual components are incorporated into the curricula and daily operations of Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development program. Workforce Development Participants and Thunder Valley CDC’s staff members begin every work-day with a group prayer and “feelings-check.” Sweet grass is burned and a prayer is offered in the Lakota language, and all participants and staff members are asked one-by-one to share how they are feeling that day. The purpose of this prayer and feelings-check is to give the program staff an idea of how individual participants are feeling in terms of mental, emotional and physical health, and to facilitate a sense of community and support for all members of Thunder Valley CDC.

Participants are also encouraged to attend spiritual and cultural events offered by Thunder Valley CDC or its partners, or other organizations within the reservation. Participants' participation and attendance to such events are credited the same as they would be for class and work hours and result in a very high participation and response rate among participants. The program manager explained, for example, how, in preparation for a Sun Dance event, "We spent a day in the hills. And then about a day getting all those teepee poles ready...and the participation level in that was huge."

As with the morning prayer and feelings-check, participants, staff members and other community members participate in these cultural and spiritual events like preparing for the Sun Dance ceremony and taking part in the Traditional sweat-lodge ceremonies. The program manager noted with regard to ceremonial events like these that, "There are those program components that like next year, I'd like to have sweats scheduled for a regular time."

The lead construction trainer explained that, "You know what, this whole...construction program, everything that's happening here, evolved from spirituality...It's all spiritually-based." He warned, however, that you can't mix spirituality and business. "It's the same with the Sweat Lodge, we pray as a group, you know. It's not to solve problems, it's the spiritual cleansing." Enabling participants' involvement with cultural and spiritual events is therefore intended to instill both respect and pride in traditional culture and at the same time, as the lead construction trainer explained, "Makes them [participants] feel useful." "They want to know that they're part of something."

- **Community Building**

- By training participants, Thunder Valley CDC is in-turn provided with a trained construction workforce to build the regenerative community as well as Thunder Valley CDC office space. "We're providing the training, we're providing them the instruction and all that...that's needed, and then they are the ones that are building their own community."

- “It’s always about the community helping itself. And building itself...[which is] benefitting Thunder Valley too because it’s – it is the community coming in to help.”
- **What Thunder Valley CDC provides to participants / How the program fits within wider issues and concerns like housing, jobs and community health**
 - “Jobs are scarce here, you know, and so this is providing them – it might not be the best paying job but it still is something that keeps them going and coming back, and...their basic necessities, but then it’s also providing them with that inner stuff and the self-esteem, the pride in what they’re doing. So it keeps them coming back. And housing is so scarce.” Current estimates of housing need on the reservation is from four to eight thousand units.
 - “Community health, part of that is providing them with a healthy work environment, teaching what healthy is...healthy relationships training with them, so that they can work with their family issues, but they can also have healthier relationships with other workers and stuff...options of what’s healthy versus unhealthy, and then letting them know they have a choice.”
 - “Anything we do is affected by how we feel...that positive energy that you put into something and that’s part of the teaching of the healthiness of everything.”
 - “If I even get two or three of them, refer them to jobs that make them happy, you know, at least they learn something.”
- **Many of the participants have personal struggles such as drug and alcohol abuse, issues with their family, mental and emotional health issues**
 - “We deal with family issues. Who may have, um, mental health issues, you know...Emotional stuff going on...”
 - “And part of that health is the emotional and mental wellbeing of people. And so that’s part of this Family Restoration – being more positive, more positive communication, positive interaction, you know, more healthier people.”
 - “We have these community members – young people in the community, who have no hope, came in with no hope, no self-esteem, no...anything that, you know, except for what they’re used to growing up in. And what Thunder Valley has done for them is that it has provided them, you know, self-confidence, self-esteem, it has provided them with an income, it’s provided them with a place – something to do, something to feel good about.”

- **Short life-spans and a recent epidemic of suicides**
 - There has been a high number of suicides in the last eight months on the Reservation. “It started in December and, um, it went on through – well, we just had two suicide completions last week.”
 - The suicide victims are mostly young girls ages 14 to 23. The therapy and other support services provided by Thunder Valley CDC are therefore also intended to help participants process and recuperate from loss of friends or family members and to help them to process their grief. The life expectancy for Reservation men and women is very low, related to a variety of causes.
 - “Early deaths because of substance abuse, and, well the short life span of adult Native Americans...I mean the health issues and stuff.”
- **Therapy Sessions Offered to Participants**
 - Participants seem to be more receptive to alternative therapy sessions (such as Equine therapy) versus the traditional talk-therapy.
 - Equine therapy involves participants “spend[ing] time around the horses, they do some different trust activities with both the horses and with one another...Even having the opportunity just to be able to be out around the horses, having a little bit less formal setting tends to yield a little better conversations about what’s going on.”
 - “It’s Native...That’s where our culture comes in in part of that, too. In the culture...Connecting with the horse...”
- **Family Restoration training:**
 - Family Restoration “Focuses on the impact that addictions have on families...focuses on co-dependency and trauma and PTSD and stuff like that.”
 - “They’re going to have another one in September, I think, for the participants and the whole staff. And what it is, is, it was (the executive director’s) idea to do that so that what we’re doing, we’re hoping to build a healthy community.” Referring to both the overall Reservation community, as well as the work-community within Thunder Valley CDC and participants’ future jobs.
- **Participants’ reception to traditional therapies versus non-traditional therapies:**
 - “And that is one of the things a lot of the participants I don’t think were real keen on some of the Family Restoration trainings we did...But it was a forced level of intimacy that existed where I think staff did a good job of sharing their stories, (one staff member) has been sober for a number of years, a number of other folks, and just being up-front about that created some cohesion within the, within the group. And that’s something that, as we think about next year, how we replicate that again. But we’ve seen them respond

more positively to some of the equine therapy sessions and some of the other stuff that's not the traditional talk-therapy kind of deal. Um, and, I think, the individual who leads the Family Restoration is a, well I guess she's in her late-70s, a white woman from Rapid City. Her knowledge and understanding – her age and her race do not preclude her from knowing how things operate, and around here, but I think that, some of her reality is very different from what our participants' reality is.”

- The Family Restoration training is for both participants and staff members. As a group session, both staff and participants are encouraged to share their experiences that, for one staff member, it was important for the participants know about his background with battling alcoholism and how he was able to overcome that.
 - When he was drinking, he stayed away from spirituality out of respect. “Out of respect, you know, I still believed in those teachings...I believed in it. But out of respect I didn't use them. I stayed away from them.”
 - However, through spirituality, he was able to recover. “A lot of friends quit with the AA groups, but I did it spiritually.”
 - “These guys out here have all of these problems with drugs and alcohol and stuff. I lived that way. Till I was 32 years old I lived that way. Exactly what they're going through.”
 - “So for me it's important for them to know that, I was just like this. I seen this other side, I've lived on the other side. But I've also lived on this side too where everything is...It feels good to wake up in the morning, you know, I'm just glad to wake up in the morning, you know, open my eyes in the morning... You realize how precious life is.”
- Participants also have group counseling sessions every two weeks where “[the counselor] does a lot of the grief issues, substance abuse issues, relationship stuff...So, he's able to help – help us help them through that part.”
- **Participant Encouragement and Support / Building Trust**
 - “So that's the reality is we just have to kind of meet, meet folks here where they're at.” Referring to participants' personal problems that, in another context, would likely result in their being fired from the workplace.
 - “Well, the answer to that I think – it's the relationships that we build, personally that I've built with these students.”

- “And their comfort in calling me and saying ‘I’m not going to come in today because my boyfriend is drunk,’ or ‘I don’t have a baby sitter, or, you know, that type of thing.’”
- One participant was having “Trouble with the law and ended up in a corrections facility for about 2 weeks. Um, but we just left a note with them to say, ‘if you want to come back when your time is done, we’ll do this, if there’s substance abuse counseling that’s mandated we’ll make sure that you get that’ sort of deal.”
- The daily morning group-prayer and feelings-check also acts to “It kind of helps me gauge where they’re at for the day, um, and then, it kind of opens it up for them to, like, coming in if they have problems or if they have things going on at home, or...”
- “If things are happening at home with one of my participants I would ask them I would tell them, you know ‘You go take care of that, and then you come talk to me.’”
- “And then I would find out, ‘Do you want help with this. Do you need help.’ Um, ‘This is what we can offer you,’ ...Or if they refuse to get any kind of help outside of here, because I could refer people to the different agencies because we have, like, for domestic violence, we have the...Indian Health Services-the behavioral health, we have Catholic Social Services here, for counseling, you know, all this stuff. And even if they need, like, restraining orders because an ex-boyfriend or girlfriend is harassing them, you know, we have the resources for that...If not then it’s something that comes into the plan later on, like discussing, not specifically their case, but issues surrounding those kinds of things in their counseling group...I can talk with their counselor and let him know that ‘This is what...is going on, um, this is, you know, some things I’m concerned about, is there anything you can do to address how to handle situations like that...So, we try to utilize those resources outside of here that’s on the reservation.’”
- “Cause a lot of them don’t have resources to pay insurance, to pay for a lot of those resources.”
- Regarding one participant who has having a number of personal troubles, “he was to the point of quitting and he’s like, ‘You know, I like coming here, this creates a safe place for me.’”
- “They will, you know, do whatever’s gotta be done. It’s just like, once you get working with them and you’re getting somewhere they feel a part of something.”

- “Cause they tell me everything, you know...They confide in me...And a lot of them, I know most of their parents, you know, where they came from. You gotta build that trust, once you build that trust, you know, when somebody leaves, you know well they wonder why they left, but the main reason why that person left...they know why that person left...So we just got to earn that trust and I think we’ve done that so far.”
- **Holding Participants Accountable for Goals-Achievement, Meeting Expectations:**
 - “We’ve been able to develop some programing where we’ve, you know, recognized the need for consistency...We recognize the need for, um, safety, we recognize the need for, you know, those types of things with our Workforce Development Program participants.”
 - Regarding setting Expectations: “And, to build that consistency that we’re here, we’re available, you know, this is what we expect of you...just setting all those boundaries.”
 - “We can control the quality and consistency of the staff and individuals who are associated with Thunder Valley. Kids know, the participants know [that the lead construction trainer is] going to be here on Monday morning at 8:00, ready to go.”
 - Staff members recognize the need for goals-setting and holding participants to their goals: “They weren’t expected to be accountable by former staff.”
 - **Program Strengths / Participant Progress**
 - Staff members’ enthusiasm to make it work: “OK, let’s do this, and get it going and let’s make this something.’ And...I think that the progress is awesome.”
 - Participants’ progress and meeting expectations: “Seeing the progress that some of our participants have made over the time that we’ve been here. I mean you could just see it in a lot of them. But the ones, I call them the “core” Workforce Development participants because they’ve been here from the beginning, they’ve completed all their classes, completed all the requirements set forth by the grant, and then what we’ve required of them. Because I think we kind of exceeded the grant’s expectations for them. So, yeah, they’ve done that, and...they’re the ones I can look at today and say, ‘You know, he’s really made a good – he’s made progress. You can see it in the way he carries himself and the way he communicates, you know, and ...that’s what I see in that.”
 - Faith in participants: “[He] may not be the most skilled laborer that we have, but we know outside of something that’s just really impacted his life, he’s

going to be here day in and day out and that helps us to figure out just sort of who that next group is to work with.”

- “I’ve worked with a lot of students in the last eight years I had a construction company and I’ve worked with a lot of young people who I tried to put them to work and I can tell those people the ones who really want to do this. And I can tell the ones that are here just for the stipend.”
- Have you noticed a difference in participants? “Uh huh. Uh huh. Yes, some of the ones that are actually learning something. They’re taking the lead and learning something...I don’t know it’s just the way you got to deal with it. Some of them don’t take this seriously. You can tell the older ones they’re the ones that they already got the attitude that, you know, I can do the same thing, then they, they quit. It’s the young ones that are coming up. Those naïve guys.”
- **Community Input, Participation and Outreach**
 - Thunder Valley CDC is trusted by the community. The Executive Director has wide community support that is likely related to his running of the program in terms of welcoming community feedback. “[He] is always willing to listen to the people, you know...Everything he does he puts out there to the people. He’s real transparent in everything he does, and so that the community knows, the people know all the time what’s going on with us.” Does that help to keep Thunder Valley in-tune with the needs of the community? “Yeah, it does. I think it does. There’s, um, cause he’s a person who’s a very well-known figure on the reservation now because of the work he’s doing and because he’s, um...approachable. You know, people are safe enough, they feel safe enough to come in and tell him their concerns or offer their ideas.”
 - “Facebook, the radio [The Outreach Coordinator does a weekly radio program]...also, we have a lot of the communication people on staff now because they’re experts on figuring that out, with the newsletters and...A lot of word of mouth...[staff members recently came on board who] do podcasts, they know how to do all this media stuff.
 - “We’re going to start meeting with the schools this fall and hoping to catch the participants who are, who have dropped out of school, who aren’t doing anything, or the college.”
 - “We try to facilitate as many meetings out here as we can to bring folks from the different communities to see what it is that’s going on, and, when we move into our recruitment for the next group, uh, next cohort of participants, we’ll do a lot of focus on just basic relational meanings with administrators and, um, counselors with the high schools in the area. Saying, alright, who are the kids you know that may not have finished school, for whatever reason, it just wasn’t a good mix for them, but you still think they’d excel in this, and,

like who are those individuals. And then we're working to identify some key folks in each community, and basically do a house meeting with them, bring folks together for a couple hours, to talk about the Thunder Valley program, about what's going on with Workforce Development..."

- Due to the lack of jobs on the Reservation, Thunder Valley CDC has had a number of applicants who don't qualify for the program under the terms of the grant due to, for example, their age. "We have people applying, but they're, like, the older guys. The older people because the jobs are so scarce that, if there's a stipend or some kind of income there, but, we can't get take anybody over 26. So we've had to turn away a whole lot of over 26-year olds."
- A transit system has recently been put into place on the Reservation which will widen the reach of the Workforce Development program within the reservation community.
- **Financial and Professional Training**
 - "Helping them get their IDAs, Individual Development Account classes, which focuses on budgeting and finance management and different things like that...I'm also a trainer with Working with Traditions which is a program that was developed to help people in the workplace...recognize when they need to ask for help, how to ask for help, how to time-manage, how to budget."
 - Building participants' professionalism: "You can learn a lot of stuff here – practice. When they get out there with the way these guys are going, they ain't going to put up with that...Ain't gonna have a job anymore. In one of my classes I told him that when you actually go to work out there, they're not going to wait for you... You know, right now, we're here. It's a good program it's brand new. We wait for you every morning to get here. You know, so we're trying to train you guys to be on time and be responsible... You got to be here on time."
- **Does this program provide a model for community development?**
 - "I think it does, because I think it proves...it shows that it can be done. Because a lot of times our people, um, don't have that...level of belief in themselves. Or don't realize that they have the ability to do that...So, [this program shows that] we do have that ability to create these things, and to make them successful..."
 - What about for non-Native communities? "I think so, too, cause I think...just bringing a community together in itself is healing. No matter what. No matter where you come from, what nationality you are, anything, to bring the community together is probably the most healing thing to do."

- **Why does this program work?**
 - “I think one of the biggest reasons why it works is because all of us believe this in this. All of us believe that this is worthwhile, that our participants are worthwhile, that what we’re going to become is worthwhile.”
 - “The administrators in the program that are committed to see this out. I know I am. I think I speak for [the education coordinator] too and [the program manager]. They’re committed to making this happen, make it work. Cause it’s a good thing, you know, to get the trust of these young people.”
- **What would you change?**
 - “Bigger. More office space...but other than that, with the program, there’s nothing I could say that we really need to change at this time.”
 - “I just didn’t like the turnover. From the beginning, you know. But, I understand cause I’m a lot older than some of those guys that can’t put up with that...But I talked to them too, you know, you got to think about what you doing and this decision you’re making. What we’re doing is going to make a big – it’s already made a big impact just by what we’re starting here. You know, just hang in there, you know, just don’t quit. Think about it. Be adult about these things.”
- **Lessons Learned:**
 - Lessons learned from this cohort that will change how the program runs with future cohorts: “We had couples that were part of the program and that didn’t work out[because] either one quit or both quit...had participants...from the same geographical area [and would] do a lot of these things that cause them to not show up together. The selection process we have to refine...what requirements are we gonna set forth for them to be a part of this program...require more from them...but, I think that...because this is our first year, that we’re finding out what to debug and things that are going to be – you know, what was our challenges, what do we need to look at differently or address differently.”
- **Challenges:**
 - “Some of our external partners that we’ve worked with, it’s been a little bit more challenging either based on their lack of capacity with staff, um, staff turnover, which then makes it difficult for them to present programs here.” Referring to, for example, participants who were involved in the GED courses at OLC whose courses were interrupted during OLC’s summer recess, delaying their GED testing.
 - “We just try to plan for to the best of our ability.”
 - “And then the question becomes, you know, as participants prepare for the workforce, is the workforce environment that [they are a part of in the future]

going to mirror their experience in the ten months here. Probably not. You know, from a work standpoint, you know. The social support that exists [here]...you know, not talking to your boss for three days or not being someplace, you know, you could be fired in that sort of situation.” For Thunder Valley CDC, the need for that social support, however, supersedes the need for an experience that will truly “mirror” that of the typical workplace. The support participants receive from Thunder Valley CDC will aid in their transition into the workplace and help participants to both get and keep future jobs.

○ **Transportation:**

- The Pine Ridge Reservation is a large rural area and transportation to and from Thunder Valley CDC is a challenge for many participants. To get there every day some participants will, “car pool...they’ll walk...We’ve had kids hitchhike in...some come in with the staff. Sometimes we’ll go after them if they call in and miss their ride or whatever, then I’ll just go pick them up...We find ways! On the reservation, you find a way.”

○ **Previous “Development” Efforts:**

- “Because I seen what was going on here all along. Nobody was taking the lead in anything. It was all outsiders coming in, dictating everything, taking all the money and leaving, while us guys are all out there doing all the work. And I seen a lot of the older people that... did all the work and they were good at what they did, but were only getting paid a dollar or two above minimum wage.”
- “Companies coming in here were not Indian companies and they took all the profits out of here.”
- “Now I just think about it... Why is it so hard to be honest, Man?” It’s just that greed took over everything on this reservation. It’s colonization, man, it just taught us how to be greedy.”
- “And that’s the piece that, too...there are so many non-profits that come this white supremacist mindset that, ‘we white people will show you how to do this and it will benefit you.’ Well, that shit doesn’t work and it’s been proven time and time again, whether it’s contractors or not-for-profits, and so I think part of this is to, you know, giving the opportunity to choose.”

○ **Racism**

- “And it’s still here that racist mentality, it’s still here wherever you go, man. It’s...people. Non-Indians look down on us and they think they’re all supposed to be smarter than us.”

- “But I use that in the class (teaches construction courses at Oglala Lakota College, OLC) and that’s the mentality to all of us...there’s a lot of people that work off this reservation dishonest... We’re supposed to be stupid people. That’s why I started that company.”
 - “But we got to get over that somehow. Non-Natives got to get over that...That just causes that anger.”
 - Do you think that Thunder Valley also provides a safety net from racism and also instills some cultural pride? “It does. It does. That’s why I tell these stories to let them know what they’re going to run into. But what can we do? We can’t change them. To me that’s [racism is] a learned behavior and until they [racists] change, nothing is going to change.” “[Thunder Valley provides] a safe haven.”
- **Thunder Valley CDC’s Upcoming Construction Company**
 - “The next phase of this is eventually, ideally, is a work-around construction company with this part of Thunder Valley as well.”
 - “We want to start our own...construction company that the workers have ownership in. ...And so, if we get that construction company going, our participants in our program will be employable with our construction company.”
 - “Yeah. She [the Assistant Director] says she’s almost done [with the business plan.] But I think we’re hoping to get that if it all goes through and if we get the funding to start it going, um, next year hopefully, we get it going.”
 - This effort is helped by one of the staff members having “owned his own construction company on the reservation. He still has the ins and outs...”
 - **Staff Turnover**
 - Since the start of the program, there has been some turnover among the Thunder Valley CDC staff, mostly within the Workforce Development Program. For example, the current education coordinator is the third that has been hired since January while the current program manager is the second. I asked if the staff turnover impacted the participants’ motivation levels or morale.
 - “I do think it impacted them when the other staff...the original staff left.”
 - “It took us a little while to build that trust with them.”
 - “I think it’s going to be a good thing because [the current Program Manager] and I are going to be there from the beginning of this [next] cohort.”

- It seems that the current education coordinator and program manager are likely to stay with the program for the long-term. They are both highly valued by both participants and other staff members within the program, and seem to be committed to the program's success.
- **Participant Turnover**
 - Since the start of the program, there has been some turnover among the Workforce Development program participants. For example, at the time I conducted these interviews, five of the original ten participants remained within the program (and new participants came in soon thereafter to fill those spots), and as of today, only three of those original program participants remain. I asked if the participant turnover impacted the participants' motivation levels or morale.
 - “We have brought on five new participants because we've had five of the old quit.”
 - “The new ones, they've only been here maybe two weeks.”
 - “I think it impacts them when their peers leave.”
 - “Now, you know, there will be days when they don't show up until late in the morning after somebody leaves, and I know that that's part of it. So, we have [the therapist who does the bi-weekly group counseling]...And he processes those things with them. He does a lot of the grief issues, substance abuse issues, relationship stuff...So, he's able to help – help us help them through that part.”
- **Evaluations Feedback and Recommendations for Sweet Grass Consulting, LLC.**
 - Positive feedback on evaluation materials:
 - “I love it in the sense that it's like a treatment plan that I can utilize with them.” This staff member has a background in social work, drug and alcohol counseling and other behavioral health. She hadn't expected to utilize a lot of her skills and background in her job here at Thunder Valley CDC. So, in keeping with her experience helping people with similar struggles (with, for example, drugs and alcohol), “It's really helped me to help them,” “How to goals-set.”
 - The Education Coordinator recommends that Thunder Valley staff members also complete the IEP and ISPs – both to help them to understand what information the Plans are trying to obtain and how to best complete them, but also to track staff members' goals and progress.
- **ISP, IEP, CSP Format:**
 - The Education Coordinator wants to be able to enter the data into an actual form. That way she can print it out for participants to look at; keep with participants' other documents; could enable easier monthly review for

tracking trainings and completion dates, tracking goals and goals-achievement, etc. Would be easier to use both for the education coordinator and the participants.

- Recommendation: Perhaps we could create a printable report in MS Access or another easy-to-use program that can then be uploaded to Salesforce with the appropriate codes.

○ **SalesForce:**

- The Education Coordinator would like further training on how to use Salesforce. Preferably hands-on training where she can be shown how to do what needs to be done with completion of forms, obtaining reports from Salesforce, etc.

○ **ISP, IEP, CSP:**

- Completion is difficult when the plan doesn't correspond with what's going on with the program at that time. For example, while projected dates were presented within the Objective Work Plans for the grant application, and used correspondingly within the ISP, IEP, and CSP, delays in the start of the construction of the first house (due to changes within the engineering plan that had to be reworked) meant that the CSP could not accurately reflect what participants were actually doing and learning.
- Recommendation: Perhaps they should be less specific. We could also include a "For Staff Completion Only" section in which they can put notes that would indicate what is preventing the completion of the forms.

○ **Communication:**

- "I think what you guys can do is just communicate more on where we are on the project, when you start coming up with them questions and stuff..."
- Recommendation: More regular communication with staff members may help to better target the Plans to the situation (i.e. work delays, etc.)
- "See that would probably work – those questions would probably work the second year." "But I wouldn't change those – the way you guys got them set up; it's just that communication. Cause I realized I said, you know all these questions don't really pertain to me, you know. I got to fill this out as the construction coordinator and we didn't even reach any of these things yet. We didn't even start anything yet."

4.6 Phase V Deliverables

4.6.1 Program Viability Report

This report will be completed and submitted in December at the official end of the Workforce Development Program for Cohort 1. Due to some unforeseen delays in the Workforce Development Program which will be explained in the next chapter, the completion of this report will take place in December and results will therefore not be detailed within this thesis.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND PERSONAL REFLECTION

Every day at 8:30am, Thunder Valley CDC staff members, Workforce Development Program participants, volunteers and visitors (like myself on the day I conducted interviews and the focus group), take part in a morning prayer-session and feelings-check. While gathered in a circle, the prayer is offered in the Lakota language, and sweet-grass is burned and offered to all participants. Then, going around the room, individuals tell the group how they're feeling that day, what they're looking forward to, what they're thankful for, and whatever else they want to share. In the informal, yet purposeful way that characterizes much of how Thunder Valley CDC operates (and possibly the reservation in-general), this morning gathering is a reminder of the importance of community on the reservation and of coming together for a common purpose. These are among the strengths of Thunder Valley CDC – operations that are relevant to and consistent with the ways of the people, that are oriented to the benefit of the whole, and that at the same time, emphasize empathy and support for the circumstances of individuals.

Conducting a thorough evaluation of Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development program at this point has presented a few challenges. As explained by the education coordinator, "Because this is our first year, that we're finding out what to debug and things that are going to be – you know, what was our challenges, what do we need to look at differently or address differently." Among the challenges involved in this evaluation was staff turnover. The current education coordinator, for example, is the third that was hired for that position since January. The first education coordinator decided not to accept the position just before the program's official launch on January 5, 2015, while the other education coordinator left the program in March. The current project manager is the second that was hired since January. Both of the

current education coordinator and program manager came on-board with Thunder Valley CDC in April, which delayed completion of some of the evaluation materials.

High participant turnover (as of today, only four of the original ten participants have remained in the program) also complicated the regular quarterly completions/updates to the ISP, IEP, and CSPs. Of those participants who left the program early, and who completed the early-exit questionnaire, their reasons for leaving related to moving for other job opportunities (to, for example, Rapid City, SD) and getting another job that paid more. To the question that asked participants whether there was anything Thunder Valley CDC staff could have done to have kept them from leaving the program, all responded with “No.” Without getting too personal into participants’ reasons for leaving the program, I attempted to further explore this with focus group participants. Again, when I asked if there was anything Thunder Valley CDC staff could have done to have kept them from leaving the program, they responded that “No, they had already made up their minds.” One participant mentioned that some of their departures may have been due to, “They saw all the money they had saved up in the IDA account and just jumped at that.”

A further complication to this evaluation related to delayed construction on the first housing unit. Engineering designs for the first house that participants were going to build had to be revisited and reworked as the original plans did not consider the ground conditions and terrain on which the unit would be built. This set-back delayed participants’ ability to participate in home construction from start to finish, as is among Thunder Valley CDC’s stated goals for the Workforce Development Program for each cohort. As a result, for the CSPs, specific goals-achievement in terms of construction training that participants received up to this point were difficult to gauge. Cohort 1 therefore has very much represented a testing or pilot phase for the Workforce Development Program. A number of “lessons learned” have hereby emerged in terms

of both the operations of the Workforce Development Program, as well as the most accurate and fair means of measuring and evaluating the Program's successes.

Among the recommendations I have made to SGC for the evaluation of subsequent cohorts for the Workforce Development Program is to lessen the specificity of participants' CSPs and to allow for modifications to the plan to be made by the lead construction trainer. Further, as was suggested by the lead construction trainer, I have recommended that a greater effort be made and an effective means developed to establish, greater communication between Thunder Valley CDC staff members and SGC evaluators. This will keep SGC informed of significant changes occurring within the program that may impact the completion of participants' CSPs, ISPs, and IEPs.

In terms of goals-achievement as it relates to participants' development as depicted in their ISPs and IEPs, the challenges identified above with the delayed home construction project were less debilitating. The education coordinator, for example, has been able to utilize the IEP to track participants' various completed trainings, to identify barriers to goals-achievement as it relates to education goals, and to guide her regular one-on-one meetings with participants to review and update their plans. She was pleased with the format of the IEP and its emphasis on the achievement of short- and long-term goals. She compared it to a treatment plan as she had used in her previous career in behavioral health, social work, and drug and alcohol addictions counseling. She was frustrated, however, with the Salesforce database in which IEPs are created and updated, and would like further training on how to use and work with Salesforce. She would also prefer to be able to print out the IEP in a more readable format than that provided in Salesforce reports. I have therefore made further recommendations to SGC that IEPs are completed using Microsoft Access and coded so as to then upload to Salesforce for evaluation.

This would enable the education coordinator to modify the plan according to her needs and those of the participants. Also, it would enable her to print-out the IEPs for participants to better track their own training completions and goals-achievements in a readable and user-friendly format.

Participants' ISPs were similarly not drastically affected by changes within the construction of the housing unit as, like the IEPs, these are more based on ascertaining and supporting participants' goals in terms of physical, personal, emotional, financial and professional health, and less to their specific interests and goals in sustainable construction. The goals identified here are less tangible than those within the CSP, falling instead under the goals of support, and personal and professional development as determining "success." The participants targeted for the Workforce Development Program have specific challenges that relate to their selection for the program, such as lack of employment and income. Related to these challenges are participants' general lack of skills in financial management and lack of checking or savings accounts. So, while only 27% of participants had a savings account at the start of their participation in the program, 100% of participants involved in the program now have savings and individual development accounts. Participants have received related trainings in how to use their IDA accounts, as well as financial management and budgeting. Participants have received additional trainings in professional development that will also assist them in being hired for other jobs in the future. These trainings include resume development, time management, and vocational rehabilitation. Like their financial trainings, these will help participants whether or not they complete the full ten-month Workforce Development Program.

Participants also face social and personal challenges that the Workforce Development Program aims to address so as to further assist participants to succeed within the program. Some participants have drug or alcohol dependencies. So, for example, Thunder Valley CDC provides

participants with regular Family Restoration training, which is aimed at helping participants to recognize the impacts that addictions have on their families. Many participants have need for counseling in areas such as grief-processing related to the low life expectancy of individuals living on the reservation, and to a recent epidemic of teen suicides. Regular group-counseling sessions are aimed at helping participants to process and deal with grief.

What seems to be most important to helping participants deal with personal challenges like those described above that may impact their ability to succeed in this program, however, is the non-judgmental support they receive from staff and other participants at Thunder Valley CDC. With regard to one participant who, the program manager explained, had legal troubles resulting in his having to leave the program who, “Ended up in a corrections facility for about two weeks...we just left a note with them to say, ‘if you want to come back when your time is done, we’ll do this, if there’s substance abuse counseling that’s mandated we’ll make sure that you get that’...” Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development Program stands out from other community development efforts and is strengthened by its emphasis on support for participants in various aspects of their lives. This reflects the various areas of need for many of the participants in this program, as well as the view of the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and emotional health.

The Workforce Development Program thus takes a realistic approach to participants’ personal and professional development that takes into account participants’ individual realities. Staff members have recognized, therefore, that to make this program effective and to help individuals to succeed within it, they must try to “meet them [participants] where they’re at” (Program Manager, August 20, 2015). At the same time, Thunder Valley CDC’s Workforce Development Program provides structure and consistency that are modeled by the staff and

exercised in daily program operations that help participants adapt to the requirements of the workplace. Stated the lead construction trainer,

You know, right now, we're here. It's a good program it's brand new. We wait for you every morning to get here. You know, so we're trying to train you guys to be on time and be responsible... it's just the way you got to deal with it... we just got to earn that trust and I think we've done that so far.

Having participants' trust is important to staff members' ability to support participants' success within the program as they simultaneously deal with their personal challenges. This was one of the main concerns related to staff turnover for this program so far. The roles of the education coordinator and program manager relate directly to participants' experiences within the Workforce Development Program and in some participants' abilities to succeed within the program with adequate support and resources.

Among the recommendations I have made to Thunder Valley CDC regarding the success and viability of the Workforce Development Program relates to staff retention. It seems, however, that the current education coordinator and program manager are better suited to their positions than the previous education coordinator and program manager, and both expressed their commitments to "seeing this out." Staff turnover may have therefore simply been a matter of selection and "fit." Another recommendation I made to Thunder Valley CDC is related to childcare. As many of the Workforce Development participants have one or more children, their attendance to the program is often related to their abilities to find regular and reliable childcare. This relates further to the importance of trust and support in this program in that, as explained by the education coordinator: "And their comfort in calling me and saying 'I'm not going to come in today because my boyfriend is drunk,' or 'I don't have a baby sitter,' or, you know, that type of thing."

Transportation is another challenge for participants' regular attendance as many participants do not have a personal vehicle in an area that is vast and rural. As explained by the education coordinator, participants get to work by

car pool...they'll walk...We've had kids hitchhike in...some come in with the staff. Sometimes we'll go after them if they call in and miss their ride or whatever, then I'll just go pick them up...We find ways! On the reservation, you find a way.

This statement underscores the nature of life on the reservation in terms of making things work with limited resources. Thunder Valley CDC aims to change that and to find a way that lessens the burdens on individuals not just in terms of transportation and employment, but in terms of community development and rebuilding.

In keeping with the cultural foundation of Thunder Valley and their emphasis on cultural healing, the cultural and spiritual components of the Workforce Development Program are integral to participants' success within the program. As explained earlier with the morning prayer and feelings-check, a sense of community is established and reinforced in the daily operations of Thunder Valley CDC through their inclusion of cultural and spiritual components. A sense of shared-experience and pride is embedded within all of Thunder Valley CDC's efforts that in-turn suggests the greater importance of the organization's overall mission. The cultural and spiritual components of Thunder Valley CDC's Workforce Development Program, along with their other programs and initiatives, are what seems to be one of the organization's greatest strengths. Restoring cultural pride seems to be one of Thunder Valley CDC's main agendas that, for participants, provides a sense of self-worth and identity that has for generations been undermined by efforts of assimilation. In this way, Thunder Valley CDC's spiritual and cultural components also provide another mechanism of support for participants and other community members.

Among the other strengths of Thunder Valley CDC is that it is supported by the reservation community. By facilitating and encouraging community engagement, Thunder

Valley promotes a relationship with the reservation community built on trust and transparency. Through their weekly radio program, community meetings, regular meetings with the tribal council, and a known receptiveness to community feedback and input, Thunder Valley CDC is able to expand both its reach within and outside the community, and its integrity in the eyes of the community it serves. Closely related to this, that is another of Thunder Valley CDC's strengths, is leadership. The education coordinator said of Thunder Valley CDC's Executive Director that

[He] is always willing to listen to the people, you know...Everything he does he puts out there to the people. He's real transparent in everything he does, and so that the community knows, the people know all the time what's going on with us.

When probed further about whether the Executive Director's approach helps to keep Thunder Valley in-tune with the needs of the community, she further explained,

Yeah, it does. I think it does. There's, um, cause he's a person who's a very well-known figure on the reservation now because of the work he's doing and because he's, um...approachable. You know, people are safe enough, they feel safe enough to come in and tell him their concerns or offer their ideas.

Thunder Valley's programs, as designed and intended to address the issues confronting their community, are holistic. They are multi-faceted and represent community reciprocity and, in terms of cultural healing, overall community and individual well-being. In this way, Thunder Valley CDC's efforts are again aligned with those of other indigenous communities in the global South who emphasize the *buen vivir* concept explained in Chapter 2. This well-being approach to development contrasts with previous non-Native American designed development efforts in Indian Country, as well as the dominant economic paradigms of Western capitalism. For indigenous peoples like the Lakota, they are a better fit within their cultural frameworks and are thus another strength within the efforts of Thunder Valley CDC, which will, I believe, ultimately lead to its success.

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