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Community support high for financial literacy as Four Bands launches new program

Financial literacy is the ability of individuals to make appropriate decisions to properly manage their personal finances. And in a time of economic uncertainty, financial responsibility plays a critical role in everyone's lives.

Recognizing the value of financial education opportunities early in life, Four Bands Community Fund offers programs that are benefitting residents of the Cheyenne River Reservation. The Mazaska K'sapa Nitawa (Your Money Wisdom) Individual Development Account program promotes money savings to purchase assets. Four Bands' Youth Entrepreneur Internship Program provides participants with hands-on work experience allowing interns to earn and save money while gaining skills in the workplace. In all, 33 adults and 28 youth have successfully completed these programs, resulting in over \$75,000 in savings match paid to the participants for their asset-building goals, including the pursuit of higher education.

To further promote the importance of fiscal responsibility, Four Bands is launching a new initiative this fall to support youth entrepreneurship and financial literacy throughout the Reservation. The Building for the Seventh Generation *Wicoicage Sakowin kin un Wicakagapi* project will prepare future generations to create and support private businesses, become better stewards of their money and expand assets rather than debts. Four Bands will enlist the help of community organizations, area schools and local residents to offer opportunities to benefit area youth. The two-year project is funded by the Administration for Native Americans.

The support for financial education reaches even further thanks to the efforts of Senator Tim Johnson and the VISA Corporation. The new computers and financial literacy curriculum, recently presented to Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School, are assets to the school, students and the community as well as a compliment to the programs offered by Four Bands Community Fund.

"Four Bands is grateful to Senator Johnson and VISA for gifting the laptop computers and financial literacy curriculum to the students at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School," said Tanya Fiddler, Executive Director of Four Bands Community Fund. "Four Bands has been promoting financial education since inception and is benefitting from a partnership with Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures to reach our goals."

To thank Senator Johnson for his support of the residents of the Cheyenne River Reservation, and for promoting the importance of financial literacy, Four Bands' staff and board presented him with a star quilt wall hanging made by local entrepreneurs.

"We appreciate Senator Johnson advocating for federal programs that provide funding for our operations," Fiddler added. "Our visions for the reservation and the state align with the development of wealth through private sector business development. Our communities and entrepreneurs are ready and willing to create jobs and economic opportunities on Cheyenne River. "

Johnson stated, “The Four Bands Community Fund in Eagle Butte has made great progress in just the past few years providing lending and financial literacy to the Cheyenne River Community. Tanya Fiddler and the rest of the staff are to be commended for their work. I was proud to secure \$196,000 in appropriations for the Fund this past year.”

To learn how you can benefit from Four Bands’ programs and services, call (605) 964-3687, visit the staff at 101 S. Main St. in Eagle Butte or log on to FourBands.org.

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