



FOUR BANDS

Teahya Woecun

WINTER
2008

Page 1

- Director's message
- Grow with us

Page 2

- Taxes done for free
- Partner Highlight: Tri-Community Economic Enhancement

Page 3

- Credit Builder = Opportunities
- Family benefits from Credit Builder program

Page 4

- Entrepreneurship Fair: What's in it for you?

FOUR BANDS STAFF

Tanya Fiddler
Executive Director

Donita Fischer
Youth Program & Partnership Coordinator

Cora Mae Haskell
Business & Finance Trainer

Darla Lawrence
Finance & Administrative Officer

Nicole Seaton Fiddler
Program Coordinator

Mark Shupick
Business Success Coach

Wynona Traversie
Program & Lending Director



Four Bands' staff and board members accept the Circle of Honor Award for Outstanding Leadership. Pictured, from left: Mark Pinsky, President, Opportunity Finance Network; Four Bands board members Jill Kessler and Mary Olive Johnson; Four Bands staff Wynona Traversie and Tanya Fiddler; and Elsie Meeks, President, Oweesta.

A Message from the Executive Director

Happy New Year! 2008 has been an exciting year for Four Bands Community Fund. We are honored to again receive national recognition for our work.

We were named the recipient of the Circle of Honor Award for Outstanding Leadership at the Opportunity Finance Network conference in Albuquerque, NM during their 2008 annual conference. The award, presented by First Nations Oweesta Corporation and Opportunity Finance Network, is given to a Native Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that strives to increase capital and access to financial resources in Native communities.

Staff member Cora Mae Haskell was named the 2008 Outstanding Entrepreneurship Educator by the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education. The recognition is given to an entrepreneurship educator who provides outstanding service to the field of entrepreneurship.

We are pleased to welcome a new member to Four Bands' board of directors. Kristy Circle Eagle, of Eagle Butte, brings first-hand knowledge of Four Bands' programs and entrepreneurship development to the board. Her experience as a local entrepreneur is valuable to our continued success.

Wopila Tanka (With great thanks!), Tanya Fiddler, Executive Director

Grow with us

Since our organization began in 2000, we've experienced steady growth. We're proud to share our accomplishments of the last eight years and we invite you to join us.

- 1,000 adults and 350 youth have benefited from technical assistance
- 192 people have completed our business development training
- Over \$1,150,000 in loans have helped create and expand 73 Native-owned businesses
- 24 loans, totaling \$48,000, were awarded to help repair credit histories
- The Individual Development Account (IDA) program has committed more than \$171,000 in savings match to 33 adults and 37 youth for asset-building goals

ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

Four Bands will continue providing a wide array of valuable services and opportunities to the residents of the Cheyenne River Reservation. We're confident we'll witness more success in the New Year. Find out how we can help you reach your business goals. Visit us at 101 S. Main St. in Eagle Butte, online at FourBands.org, call 605-964-3687 or email info@fourbands.org.

- Four Bands researched local consumer buying habits and compared the total businesses on the Cheyenne River Reservation to Fort Peck Reservation. It revealed opportunities for new businesses. A report is available on our website. Check it out!

GET YOUR TAXES DONE FOR FREE, OPEN YOUR OWN SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Four Bands, with the support of Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures, is offering free tax preparation again in 2009. Beginning January 5th through April 15th, residents of the Cheyenne River Reservation can take advantage of this service. Last year the partnership was responsible for filing 300 tax returns for nearly \$300,000 in tax refunds to residents in our local economy, including \$136,500 in Earned Income Tax Credits.

New this year is the opportunity for direct deposit of tax returns into savings accounts (see insert for more details). Our staff will assist customers in opening savings accounts at local banks or credit unions in order to earn money in interest and plan ahead for financial emergencies. The service is a compliment to our Making Waves campaign as it promotes the support of local financial institutions and encourages local residents to make sound money management decisions.

Tax appointments are available weekdays between 9:30 am and 6 pm. To schedule an appointment, call 605- 964-3687. Tax preparers will be on-hand at the depot building, next to Four Bands' offices at 101 S. Main St., in Eagle Butte. Customers are asked to bring two forms of identification along with W2s. Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC), a refundable federal income tax credit, are available to those who qualify.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that you could use your tax return to join Four Bands' IDA program? Deposit your money into a matched savings account and save money to purchase assets such as a home, a business or for higher education. Space is still available to participate. Call us!

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: TRI-COMMUNITY ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT

The Tri-Community Economic Enhancement (T.R.E.E.) Initiative, serving the communities of Dupree, Isabel and Timber Lake, has spread its wings in several ways this year. Fifty area residents participated in the Creating a Value Added Community (CVAC) project. Through the CVAC project the three communities launched a recycling "WE CAN" campaign. The campaign is already generating positive results, however participants continue to research new ways to recycle.

T.R.E.E. offers computer classes for the three partner communities. Over 35 participants took the beginning computer class, and 11 participated in the digital camera class. T.R.E.E. will offer another beginning computer class as well as an intermediate class and farm/ranching bookkeeping in January.

In April, T.R.E.E. joined forces with Four Bands and the Mobridge Economic Development Corporation to develop the



Megan Bickel, Director
*Tri-Community Economic
Enhancement*

Four Mo TREE partnership, one of four Dakota Rising sites in the state. Four Mo TREE will provide assistance and resources to business owners and entrepreneurs to help them apply for a \$10,000 grant awarded by South Dakota Rural Enterprise.

To learn more about the T.R.E.E. initiative, to sign up for computer classes or to learn how you can benefit from the

Four Mo TREE partnership, contact Megan Bickel at 605-466-2040; email treedirector@gmail.com, or visit the organization's website, www.EnjoytheWest.com.

CREDIT BUILDER MICROLOAN PROGRAM = OPPORTUNITIES FOR CUSTOMERS



What's your credit score? For a three-digit number, it is an important value to know. A good credit score can save you paying high interest rates on large purchases such as a car, a home or a business.

Our credit builder microloan program allows individuals to build credit or rebuild damaged credit. To take advantage of the program, customers must first complete a personal finance training course. Then they are eligible to apply for a credit builder microloan for up to \$2,500, through Four Bands. Customers must present collateral at 50% of the loan amount. The money loaned is used to pay off balances that are preventing customers from moving forward to become entrepreneurs or purchase assets. Once the credit builder microloan is obtained, we report payments to the credit bureaus. Good repayment habits help raise credit scores.

Upon successful completion of the program, participants will earn recognition on their credit reports indicating participation in the program. And most importantly, customers' new credit scores will reflect a better capacity to obtain and repay a loan amount.

Resolve to build or rebuild your credit report in 2009. Contact us to learn more about participating in this valuable program.

LOCAL FAMILY BENEFITS FROM FOUR BANDS' CREDIT BUILDER PROGRAM

Jonathan Little Wounded and Melanie LeClaire were in need of a better home. Their current house was in disrepair and was a fire hazard. And with a growing family, they were motivated to find a solution.

The couple approached the Cheyenne River Housing Authority to explain their situation. The staff referred Jonathan and Melanie to Four Bands to learn how we could help them prepare for home ownership.

After visiting with our staff, Jonathan and Melanie soon applied for a credit builder microloan. Taking out the loan allowed them



Jonathan Little Wounded and Melanie LeClaire have experienced the benefits of Four Bands' Credit Builder program.

to build their credit report and improve their eligibility for a home loan.

"We really liked the personal finance training," says Melanie. "The training taught us about living debt-free and now we know how to budget for our family."

Upon completion of the credit builder program, including the loan payoff and the personal finance lessons, Jonathan and Melanie obtained a home loan. They moved their family into a new home in August 2008.

"The staff is wonderful," adds Melanie. "They give you the help you need, right away. They are a great group of people to work with."

Contact us to learn how we can help you create your own success story.



Four Bands Community Fund
Box 932
Eagle Butte, SD 57625

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EAGLE BUTTE SD
PERMIT NO. 18

BOX HOLDER



**FOUR
BANDS
COMMUNITY
FUND, INC.**

101 S. Main Street
PO Box 932
Eagle Butte, SD 57625

Phone: (605) 964-3687
Fax: (605) 964-3689

info@fourbands.org
www.fourbands.org

FOUR BANDS BOARD

Rob Laurenz
Board Chair

Kirk Beyer
Board Vice Chair

Nyal Moninger
Board Treasurer

Mary Olive Johnson
Board Secretary

Robert Clair

Stephanie Davidson

Lynnette Dupris

Kristy Circle Eagle

Jill Kessler

Entrepreneurship Fair: What's in it for YOU?

Mark your calendars for the 3rd Annual Entrepreneurship Fair, scheduled for **Tuesday, February 24, 2009** at Upper Elementary in Eagle Butte. Hosted by Four Bands Community Fund, the event is free and open to the public. The program will begin at 9 am and will conclude by 8 pm.

The full-day program features sessions for youth, teachers, business owners and entrepreneurs. Students from Kindergarten to 12th-grade will benefit from hands-on entrepreneurship activities throughout the day. Four Bands has teamed up with area teachers to present activities to students. Teachers will enjoy a one-hour session beginning at 4:30 pm. The event culminates in the evening with a meal and presentation, beginning at 6 pm. Local business owners and students will also receive recognition during the evening awards ceremony.

We will once again sponsor contests encouraging youth to get involved in entrepreneurship. Schools will receive more details about the contests in January.

For more information about how you, your class and your family can participate in and benefit from the Entrepreneurship Fair, contact Donita Fischer, 605-964-3687, donita@fourbands.org or Kerry Frei, 605-985-5541, lkfrei@gwtc.net. Watch for event updates, including an event agenda, in local newspapers, in schools and online at FourBands.org.



Students enjoy a business simulation game at the 2007 Entrepreneurship Fair.