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WY Treaties Matter
American Indians Tell
Thier Stories

2019 Schwartz Prize Nomination



An unidentified child dressed in regalia is seen during the 2018 Treaty of Ft. Laramie commemoration at Ft. Laramie, WY. **Mike Vanata**

For the 2019 Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize, Wyoming Humanities (WYH) nominates “WY Treaties Matter,” an ongoing, evolving, and sustainable humanities-based initiative that gives voice to Native Americans by sharing their authentic history and contemporary cultural issues with Wyomingites of all ages. This initiative educates our state’s youth through the collaborative creation of curricular materials in support of Indian Education for All legislation passed by the Wyoming legislature and signed into law by Governor Matthew H. Mead in 2017. In addition to supporting this educational mandate, the “WY Treaties Matter” initiative supports Wyoming’s adult tribal members and life-long learners by sharing—and seeking understanding of—the genuine historical and contemporary stories of native people through a variety of formats.

WY Treaties Matter

Wyomingites deeply value our state’s history and the figures that populate it. Often, however, the state’s culture ties elements of Wyoming’s history to triumphant mythical narratives disconnected from historical reality. For instance, Cheyenne, the state’s capital, markets itself through a slogan, “Live the Legend,” blurring the romantic Western cowboy myth with the complications found in historical reality, i.e. Wyoming’s history is more accurately represented through narratives of railroad development and coal and gas extraction rather than being filled with cowboys driving cattle.

This blurring is especially true of the complex history of the native people who first occupied the area and the two tribes that now occupy the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming. When telling the history of Native and Euro-American contact in our region, the nuances of these groups’ different views regarding land ownership, territoriality, spirituality, and political and social organization are often glossed over. Complicating matters even more is the fact that the Wind River Reservation’s two tribes, the Eastern Shoshone and the Northern Arapaho, have traditionally and historically regarded each other as enemies and their respective oral traditions regarding the reservation’s formation differ. This history has understandably caused tension and resentment between the two tribes on the reservation in addition to the lack of public understanding by Indian and non-Indian Wyomingites alike.



A tipi is seen during the 2018 Treaty of Ft. Laramie commemoration at Ft. Laramie, WY. **Mike Vanata**

In an attempt to address this internal tribal confusion and overall lack of knowledge in the state, in 2017 Wyoming's governor signed into law legislation known as the "Indian Education for All" bill (House Bill 76, 2017; W.S. 21-4-602), which requires the state's Department of Education to teach the history and culture of the Wind River Reservation's two tribes in the K-12 school system. This issue is more than a simple curricular mandate; it is intended to create a more tolerant and inclusive society in Wyoming, beginning with our children. In an interview with Wyoming Public Radio, the director of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center, Jason Baldes, linked knowledge of native history to current race relations in the state. "When our [reservation-based] sports teams travel to other parts of the state, we don't want to hear racial slurs," said Baldes, "and, unfortunately today, a lot of young people are faced with that. I think that an educational program that teaches kids history is a way to squash that racism, bigotry, and discrimination. The more you understand about somebody, the less you're going to have ill will toward that person."

The state legislation was a crucial first step, but it was an unfunded mandate that left Wyoming without a clear leader and guidance to collect and unify the efforts of a state eager to show its support for the legislation. Wyoming Humanities (WYH) recognized the need for an organization to give voice to tribal members and experts and scholars and to serve as coordinator and collaborator on existing and planned Indian Education projects. Inspired by the Minnesota Humanities Center's nationally recognized exhibit "Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations," Wyoming Humanities conceived of a way to bring the numerous agencies and organizations together using the framework "Why Treaties Matter" to create an impactful and culturally appreciative means of meeting the needs outlined in the legislation.

Following on the heels of a cultural network survey and utilizing our knowledge of the humanities ecosystem in Wyoming, WYH knew it was uniquely positioned to serve as a coordinator and collaborator with the existing broad range of individuals and organizations working on Native American history, culture, and educational projects including curricular materials. This initiative amplified work already




"Two Nations, One Reservation" exhibit. The full exhibit stands just under seven feet tall and occupies a space of roughly 4 ft x 3 ft. **Wyoming Humanities Photo**

started by organizations, including the hosting of two major regional events commemorating the 150th anniversary of two significant American Indian treaties that shaped the history of our state (the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty and 1868 Ft. Bridger Treaty), the production of multiple documentary films, and ongoing creation of public education materials detailing tribal history in Wyoming. In addition, several new projects were conceived by WYH and developed within this humanities network. These included the crowd-sourced creation, printing, and distribution of 125 copies of a portable "pop-up kiosk" exhibit introducing the history of the Wind River Indian Reservation, a series of public presentations video-recorded for use in classrooms around the state, a series of articles and curriculum guides in our state's online encyclopedia, and a series of podcast interviews with tribal elders and cultural leaders from both tribes of the reservation. These projects were created and designed to comply with and fully integrate into newly emerging Wyoming Department of Education curricular standards resulting from the Indian Education for All legislation.

Initiative Goals

Because of the number of organizations and groups—state-wide and local—collaborating on this project, as well as the need to assure tribal members their voices would drive the content and direction of the projects, goals needed to be agreed upon by those organizations and interested community members. To that end, WYH convened a stakeholder meeting of individuals and organizations addressing Native American issues and the current state of curricular materials related to Native Americans in Wyoming. Particular attention was paid to giving equal voice and participation to both tribes of the Wind River Indian Reservation. Participants included numerous tribal educational entities, both tribal governmental councils, as well as individual tribal educators and interested public members along with representatives from the Wyoming Department of Education, Wyoming Public Television, Wyoming State Historical Society, Central Wyoming College, and Wind River Tribal College. Group discussions about ongoing and planned projects and ways in which WYH could serve as the lead coordinator between organizations and projects identified the following goals for the “WY Treaties Matter” initiative.



Increase Wyomingites' understanding of the Wind River Indian Reservation History, including the fact that two unique and separate cultures exist on one reservation—the only instance in which two enemy tribes were ever placed on one reservation.

Organize an ongoing communication network of organizations and individuals creating content to serve curricular needs to leverage collaborating partners' work and help avoid repetition or duplication of effort.

Identify a cohesive and unified means to address Native American history at a statewide level working through realistic constraints of Wyoming's size and rural population.



Chairman Harold Frazier of the Cheyenne River Sioux walks with other members of the tribe during 2018 Treaty of Ft. Laramie commemoration at Ft. Laramie, WY. **Mike Vanata**

Initiative Impacts

“WY Treaties Matter” included the production of original humanities content, financial support of ongoing humanities projects, and promotional support of programming addressing American Indian historical and cultural issues and topics. Over 200 individual events were funded and over 50 organizational partners throughout the state were involved. While the sheer number of events funded by “WY Treaties Matter” prevents us from detailing the impact of every event, the initiative’s impact can be summarized into three main categories. (A complete list of “WY Treaties Matter” programs and events, including specific partners can be found in later pages.)

“Two Nations One Reservation” Portable Pop-Up Kiosk Exhibits

The primary goal of “WY Treaties Matter” was to increase and deepen Wyomingites’ knowledge of regional native culture and history in the state. To address the complicated history of how both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone came to share the same reservation, Wyoming Humanities program officer Sheila Bricher-Wade worked in collaboration with tribal members and non-tribal scholars to crowdsource the content to design a portable, easy-to-assemble ‘pop-up kiosk’ exhibit

and accompanying online curricular support content that could tell this complex story.

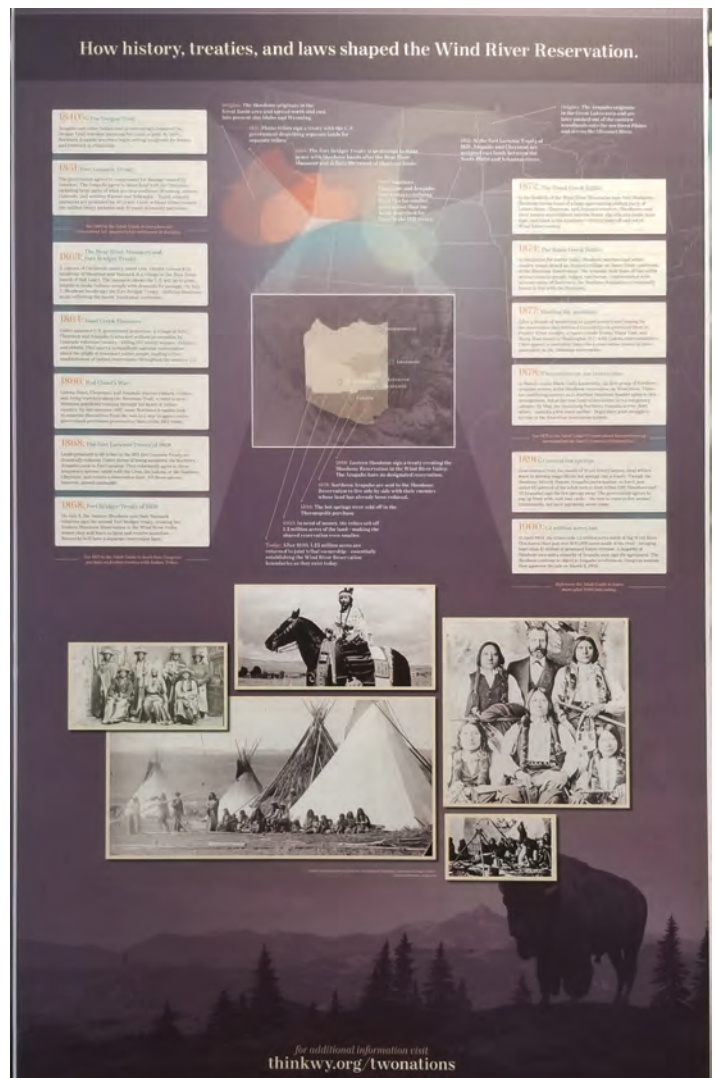
The completed exhibit, titled “Two Nations One Reservation,” was designed at the 8th grade level of comprehension for use in middle school through high school and even college level classrooms, and for use in libraries and other public venues around the state to help adults explore and understand this history. The kiosk is accompanied by two professionally designed and printed interpretive pamphlets (one for school-age children, one for adults) as well as a “host guide” to describe assembly and where to access additional copies of the interpretive pamphlets. Total cost for the content creation, exhibit and pamphlet design and printing, website support content, was over **\$185,000**, with each of the 125 copies printed having a value of over \$1,500 and distributed free of charge to every school district, every county library system, and many of the state’s most frequented museums and public venues.

The project had an unforeseen extremely positive impact on the reservation itself. Nearly a dozen exhibits were donated to the region and several are on permanent display in various locations on and near the reservation including at the InterTribal Center where both tribal governments meet. The

completed exhibit received lavish praise from both Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho and other native people who commented on never having seen the stories of the two tribes sharing the reservation reported side by side. Many reservation residents acknowledged having had a one-sided view of their reservation's history and appreciated having the shared story with positive milestones of both tribes included on the exhibit, despite ongoing tension between the tribes.

Reporting indicates that "Two Nations One Reservation" has reached **farther across the state than any other program in WYH history**. The exhibit's portable nature allowed it to be displayed in communities in which WYH has previously had a difficult time making connections. The exhibit has been displayed in 10 communities with a population of under 500, and 21 communities with populations between 500 and 2,000. The smallest community in which the exhibit has been displayed, Claremont, has a population of 124. The exhibit has, so far, been displayed in all 23 counties and 68% (67 of 99) of Wyoming's incorporated municipalities. Most schools and libraries report they plan to display the exhibit again in November for Native American Heritage month and keep moving the exhibits throughout their districts in upcoming years. The easy-to-assemble kiosk's reusable design combined with WYH's intentional, targeted outreach to smaller communities who are sometimes most in need of expanding the Wyoming narrative, allowed this exhibit to touch audiences often difficult to reach in the state.

The project has also had far-reaching impact in the classrooms of Wyoming in support of the Indian Education for All legislation. Confirmed reporting indicates the exhibit has been in at least 31 grade-school classrooms, 19 junior high classrooms, and 27 high school classrooms prior to the end of the 2018-2019 school year with more planned for 2019-2020. Teachers report designing lesson plans around the exhibit and using additional website materials from WYH and our collaborating partner, Wyoming Public Television. Many, many teachers have also shared stories of student projects inspired by the exhibit and website materials. Importantly, the most frequent observation from both native and non-native teachers has been, "I didn't know any of



A photo of the reverse side of the "Two Nations, One Reservation" exhibit.
Wyoming Humanities

this," which speaks to the need for just these sorts of materials on native history, particularly in primary educational settings.

WYH's program officer also worked to ensure the kiosk was placed in community colleges (21 of the main and branch campuses) and county libraries and branch libraries (51 out of 76). Community college classes used the exhibit as the base for projects, and research work and librarians consistently reported that "people really love it." Some libraries featured movie nights with native-centered movies and discussions following the film and the county library in Wyoming's largest community used the kiosk as the basis for two months of programming.

To ensure as wide a range of audiences encountered the kiosk as possible, WYH's program officer also placed the exhibit in 25 museums and other locations such as the Northern Arapaho



School children pose with the “Two Nations, One Reservation” exhibit in their classroom. **Courtesy photo.**

Heritage Room at the Wind River Casino, the Ft. Laramie National Historic Site, the Ft. Bridger State Historic Site, and the Intertribal Center on the Wind River Indian Reservation. It is on permanent display in the Children’s Justice Center at the Wyoming Supreme Court building and will be added to the entry of the governor’s office when the Wyoming State Capitol renovations are completed in late 2019. Counts provided by kiosk site hosts (we are still waiting on reports from 19 school districts and 28 other exhibit recipients) indicate **more than 50% of Wyoming’s citizens have had an opportunity to interact with the exhibit**, with more than 100,000 K-12 students included in that count.

Indian Education for All Curriculum Support

In anticipation of passage of Wyoming’s Indian Education for All Act, a committee appointed and led by the Wyoming Department of Education drafted revisions to the state’s social studies, English/ language arts and other standards to better reflect the history and culture of indigenous tribes of the region. Those revisions were reviewed by the public, the state Board of Education and the governor. After nearly two years, the new standards went into effect in summer 2018 and school districts were given three years to comply.

As the standards were being developed, WYH partnered with WyoHistory.org, our state’s online peer-reviewed encyclopedia hosted by the Wyoming State Historical Society, to research and draft an 18,000-word historical introduction to the story of how two enemy tribes came to share the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming. Reviewed and commented on by two dozen native and non-native elders and scholars, the revised document served as the basis for designing the content displayed on the “Two Nations One Reservation” exhibit. In addition, WyoHistory.org, which already featured hundreds of articles, maps, historical photos, field-trip suggestions and educational toolkits for classroom use, used the research for our project to create additional, new, standards-based American Indian curricular materials developed as part of this collaborative endeavor. WyoHistory.org will continue to develop more articles on related topics, providing background and resources for lesson plans being developed by native educators.

Once the standards were published, a cadre of Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone elders, scholars and non-native Wyoming educators began collaborating to produce new standards-based classroom materials on the history and culture

of the Eastern Shoshone, Northern Arapaho, and other tribes of the region. To avoid duplication of effort and build on past efforts, WYH coordinated with WyoHistory.org and many other institutions that already had content or were working on materials for classroom use in compliance with the new standards. These organizations included Wyoming PBS and its online Wind River Education Project (windriveredu.org), the Wyoming State Historical Society, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, the University of Wyoming Native American Education Resource and Cultural Center, as well as several private publishers and authors and even a game designer. All new classroom materials that came out of these collaborations were made available to the Wyoming State Department of Education for use on its official website to distribute to teachers in the state.

WYH leadership has ensured this important, but unfunded, legislation made the impact desired by our state's leaders. Our coordination ensured content wasn't created in silos and significantly lowered the chances of creating competing, or even worse, contradictory content. We also ensured that, at every step, tribal members and leaders were consulted and given opportunities to tell their stories in the ways they desired.

Amplifying American Indian Voices

"WY Treaties Matter" created opportunities for WYH to expand and enrich previous collaborative relationships and to develop and support new collaborations. Sheila Bricher-Wade, WYH program officer, served as the point of contact, documenting and disseminating information about new programs and content as information was submitted or WYH was alerted to new projects. Bricher-Wade also helped to connect individuals and organizations around the state with specific project interests and information needs – from an indigenous expert on water laws to an expert on the history of the Shoshone people and their signing of the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868. This work will be documented in creation of a database of individuals with specific skills and knowledge enabling us to connect them to serve as scholars on projects that arise.

WYH's relationships with both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes were deeply

strengthened through the project. The success of the "Two Nations One Reservation" kiosk was critically dependent on the involvement of both tribes, whose oral histories traditionally disagree about events contributing to the two enemy tribes sharing the Wind River Indian Reservation. Dozens of tribal members representing both tribes agreed to review and comment on the project at various stages of its development and content was revised according to recommendations made by both scholars and native reviewers. Written comments from these reviews were made public as additional instructional materials. Hundreds of personalized email invitations and lengthy telephone calls and follow-up in-person conversations were required to ensure an equal number of comments from Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho members were recorded. Participating tribal members frequently observed that they had not expected to be invited to comment and were genuinely surprised to have their comments considered and used to improve the products. Early on, WYH was told trust was something we would have to earn and "crowdsourcing" comments from tribal members, although very challenging, was an important part of strengthening WYH's relationships with tribal participants.

Part of collaborating with tribal members was ensuring their voices were heard in programs not led by our council. An example of this was marking the 150th anniversaries of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, in partnership with the National Park Service and the Fort Laramie National Historic Site, and the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 in partnership with the Fort Bridger State Historic Site and State Park. WYH **raised more than \$80,000** to contribute to these two events commemorating seminal treaties that had devastating impacts on the tribes and continue to shape our state's culture today. Native people were given complete control of the narrative for commemorating these events and ensuring they not be identified as "celebrations" of these treaties. More than 5,000 American Indians attended the Fort Laramie events and over 500 attended the Fort Bridger commemoration. By supporting collaborative efforts with a wide range of federal, state, and local organizations, the 1868 treaty commemorations featured a distinctly native influence that was unexpected by non-native



Native American leaders took turns addressing the crowd for hours during the 2018 Treaty of Ft. Laramie Commemoration at Ft. Laramie, WY. **Mike Vanata.**

participants and inspired all participants to consider historical interpretations far removed from the myths and legends with which they were familiar.

WYH also **invested \$80,000** in the creation of a documentary film, ***Home From School: The Children of Carlisle***, telling the story of Northern Arapaho tribal members traveling in 2017 to the grounds of the former Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, now a U.S. Army War College, to retrieve the remains of three Arapaho children who were buried there over a century ago and seeking to heal the historical trauma inflicted by efforts to assimilate Native children into white society. WYH’s “WY Treaties Matter” initiative continues to invest in documentary projects, most recently in a film called ***Art of Home: A Wind River Story*** celebrating the thriving art scene being cultivated by both tribes on the reservation. The initiative is intended to continue for years to help American Indians tell their stories to themselves and to non-Indians. Both of these films will be distributed on local and national PBS stations, amplifying the stories of both tribes.

We are a lead funder for the brand-new **Teton County Pow Wow** in partnership with the Intertribal Student Group, representing both tribes of the Wind River Indian Reservation, at Central Wyoming College. We collaborated with CWC for a speaker series, **“Nations Within a Nation,”** featuring panel discussions with Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone participants and held in conjunction with the launch of the “Two Nations One Reservation” exhibit being displayed in Jackson, WY. **Videos of these popular educational sessions** were

recorded and made available on the “Two Nations” website as supplemental curricular materials. Topics were locally relevant bringing in tribal elders to speak about topics of concern to them and their communities, including “Tribal Identity on the Wind River Indian Reservation,” “Cultural and Equitable Challenges for Native Americans in Education,” and “Water Issues on the Wind River Indian Reservation.” The model has been used by other community colleges across the state to host similar programs on relevant topics with tribal members from their areas. As part of WYH podcast productions, we have also launched a **series of podcast interviews**, with tribal elders, tribal leaders, and tribal students that is featured content on our Two Nations One Reservation website.

Since the launch of this initiative, we have become a perennial partner with the Wyoming Department of Education and its annual **Native American Education Conference** and are working towards renewing an old partnership that assisted in providing continuing education credits (PTSB credits) to teachers to attend this conference. We also partnered with the University of Wyoming’s High Plains American Indian Research Institute to host the **WY-Wind River Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Symposium**.

Our partnerships with these educational institutions will continue to strengthen and grow as our intention is to build a network, or community of practice, that collaborates closely to amplify the American Indian voice in telling their lived experience in Wyoming.

Unique and far-reaching collaborations and capacity building

The Wyoming Humanities Wy Treaties Matter project allowed us to expand previous collaborative relationships with the Wyoming Historical Society's Wyohistory.com web site, Wyoming Public Television and Wyoming Libraries. Additionally, it allowed us to develop and support new collaborations with the Wyoming Department of Education, a large number of educators, the National Park Service at Ft. Laramie National Historic Site, and the Ft Bridger Wyoming State Historic Site.

\$300K+
Invested in
programming

200+
Individual
Events /
Exhibitions

50+
Organizational
Partners

Ft. Laramie National Historic Site – NPS Honoring the Sprit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the signing of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie

- National Park Service
- Wyoming Department of Tourism
- Wyoming Governor's Office
- Wyoming Congressional Representatives
- Wyoming Legislature
- Wyoming Department of Parks and Cultural Resources
- Goshen County Economic Development
- Homesteaders Museum
- Eastern Wyoming Community College

<https://www.facebook.com/events/fort-laramie-wyoming/150th-anniversary-of-the-fort-laramie-treaty-of-1868/175689419647710/>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-indian/2018/10/31/treaty-fort-laramie/>

The Brinton Museum "150th Anniversary – Treaty of Fort Laramie" Exhibition 3/5 – 5/28 2018 and Educational Symposium 4/14 Big Horn Wyoming

Wyoming PBS – film Home from School: The Children of Carlisle

<https://www.visionmakermedia.org/films/home-school-children-carlisle>

Ft. Bridger State Historic Site Fort Bridger 150th: 150 years for Fort Bridger's Treaty

- Eastern Shoshone
- Bannock
- Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources
- Ft. Bridger State Historic Site

<https://www.facebook.com/FortBridgerTreaty150th>

Chronological summary document exploring how Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho came to share the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming.

- Wyoming State Historical Society
- Eastern Shoshone Historical Society
- Eastern Shoshone Tribal Council
- Northern Arapaho Tribal Council

Portable pop-up exhibit kiosk "Two Nations one reservation" – content developed with collaborative input from more than a dozen non-native scholars and two dozen tribal elders, educators and members. Reusable exhibits distributed to every school district and county library system in the state and to museums, teachers, and organizations requesting copies.

- Every school district in the state of

Wyoming.

- Home school organizations
- State of Wyoming Parks and Cultural Resources
- State of Wyoming Travel and Tourism
- County Libraries
- Private Schools
- Chambers of Commerce
- National Park Service Ft. Laramie National Historic Site
- Wyoming State Library

Wyoming PBS –film collaboration with Montana PBS Bozeman Trail

<https://www.montanapbs.org/programs/BozemanTrail/>

Wyohistory.org – support and match for Wyoming Cultural Trust grant to increase cross-cultural understanding and support the aims of the Indian Education for All legislation the Wyoming Historical Society will collaborate with Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho educators to develop high-quality historical content and associated lesson plans about the two tribes on the Wind River Reservation. Curricular materials and digital toolkits will be available on the Wyoming Department of Education website and posted on at the Wyoming Historical Society web site

- Wyoming Cultural Trust



The "Two Nations, One Reservation" exhibit is pictured at the Ft. Bridger historical site, WY. Courtesy Photo

- Wyoming Department of Education
- University of Wyoming American Heritage Center

<https://www.wyohistory.org/education/>

University of Wyoming High Plains American Indian Research Institute (HIPARI) and Native American Education Research and Cultural Center

Understanding and Communicating the Role of Elk in the Wind River Indian Reservation

- UW High Plains American Indian Research Institute
- National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant

Wind River Economic Development and Entrepreneurship and Cultural Symposium

- University of Wyoming High Plains American Indian Research Institute (HIPARI) and Native American Education Research and Cultural Center
- Wyoming ENDOW Committee
- Wyoming Business Council
- Wyoming Governor's Office
- University of Wyoming President's

Office

Wyoming Department of Education Native American Education Conference 2018 Conference Keynote speaker & 2019 Conference Keynote Speaker

- Wind River Casino
- Central Wyoming College
- St. Stephens Indian School

<https://edu.wyoming.gov/in-the-classroom/native-american/conference/>

Bozeman Trail Edugame Tory Sanders

- Wyoming Episcopal Church Foundation

https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/schools/article_0d3e6102-9221-5ddc-8c53-7243b210f247.html

Nations within a Nation – Creation of 3 videos of panel discussions featuring Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribal members discussing

- Tribal Identity on the Wind River Indian Reservation
- Cultural and Equitable Challenges for Native Americans in Education
- Water Environmental issues on the Wind River Indian Reservation

Discussions featured the pop-up exhibit on display in the meeting space and were open to the public. Videos made available on Wyoming Humanities Two Nations one reservation web page and format provided to other community colleges to host similar programs with tribal members in their areas.

- Central Wyoming College Riverton Campus
- Central Wyoming College Jackson Campus
- Teton County Library
- Wind River Indian Reservation Eastern Shoshone
- Wind River Indian Reservation Northern Arapaho
- Sheridan Community College
- Sheridan College Gillette Campus

2019 Bozeman Trail and the Women of Ft. Phil Kearny – speakers series

Promotion of publications: "Two Hawk Dreams" by Lawrence L. Loendorf and Nancy Medaris Stone and "The Shoshone and Arapaho Battle for a Public High School on the Wind River Indian Reservation" by Martha L. Hipp.

Lessons Learned

Large-scale programs such as “WY Treaties Matter” are often fraught with self-inflicted and unanticipated challenges from which important lessons may be learned. The program was especially enlightening regarding collaborations with organizations of all sizes and types and capacities, as well as appreciating cultural differences in work interactions and scheduling.

While WYH identified feedback from tribal members and non-native scholars as equally necessary, waiting for responses from elders and other native experts added more time than we had planned for the development of the content that shaped the exhibit. Our planned unveiling date for the “Two Nations One Reservation” kiosk—in conjunction with the Wyoming Indian Education conference—proved challenging to meet, as not enough time was allocated in the planning process for that crucial feedback. This ended up pushing

exhibit production into the month before the unveiling and delayed exhibit deliveries to schools until later in the fall semester than we had hoped. We have learned to build more time into our planning for the special contact/connection-making needed to work with elders and others on the reservation.

We were concerned about the well-known tensions between the two tribes and what this crowd-sourced content might reveal. A small but vocal group of Shoshone people believe the Arapaho people have no legal claim to the reservation and they made themselves known to us from the launch of the project. Fortunately, we were able to draw upon strong allies from both tribes as well as nationally recognized experts in both tribes’ histories and the multiple treaties that drove them to the reservation. This was a powerful learning experience for all involved.



Members of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe are picture during the 2018 Treaty of Ft. Bridger commemoration on the grounds of Ft. Bridger historical site.
Wyoming Humanities/Shannon Smith



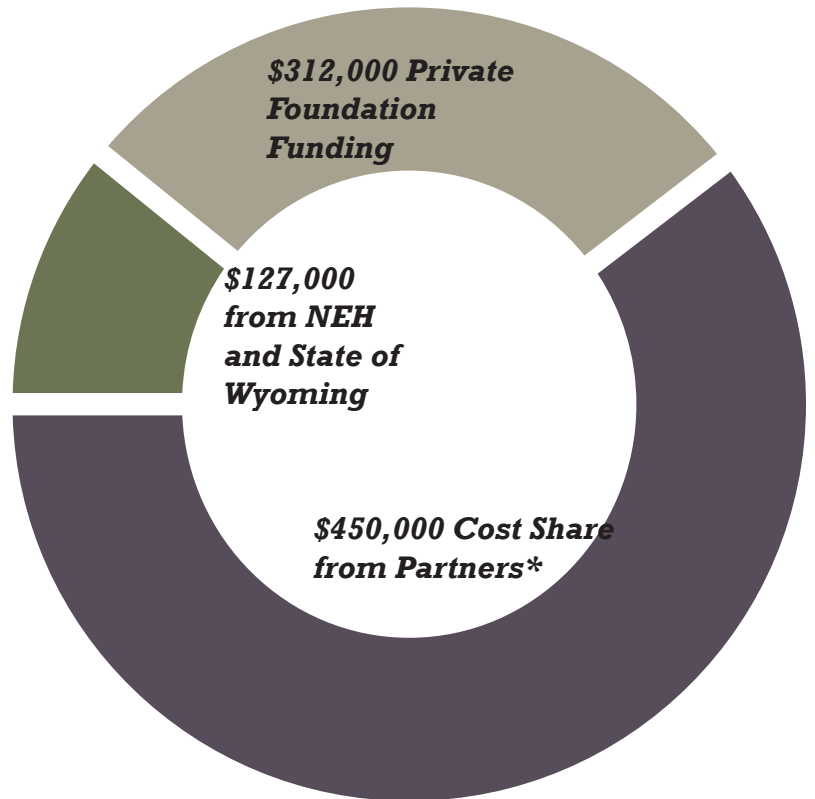
Gary Davis, CEO and Publisher of Native Business Magazine speaks during the 2019 WY-Wind River Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Symposium at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, WY. **Wyoming Humanities/Shannon Smith**

Wyoming Senator Affie Ellies speaks during the 2019 WY-Wind River Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Symposium at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, WY. **Wyoming Humanities/Shannon Smith**



Financial Structure

WYH has been involved in funding Native American projects for decades. When we brainstormed the “WY Treaties Matter” initiative, we knew we would need significantly more funding than the federal and state public funding that comprises our standard budget. This need was met in large part through a private family foundation based in Chicago that was looking to invest in Native American social justice projects and to whom our executive director, Shannon Smith, had recently been introduced. The foundation, which requires anonymity for all their investments, is passionate about Native American issues and concerns and quickly determined they wanted to support “WY Treaties Matter.” WYH was able to prove its ability to handle large scale projects due in part to our many year’s history with both the National Endowment for the Humanities and our state funding from the Wyoming Legislature. WYH was able to prove its commitment to the project thanks to the stability of our public funding sources and, through 2018, received over \$300,000 from the family foundation. They have since expressed their ongoing pleasure with all the projects their funding has enabled us to accomplish and as a result the foundation has contributed an additional \$100,000 to WY Treaties Matter projects in 2019. Combined with our public funding and the match/cost-share we have tracked for this initiative, the 2017-18 total funding approaches \$900,000 for all our “WY Treaties Matter” projects.



*Not all final reports and end metrics have been gathered.



Eagle Spirit Dancers and Singers

Photo credit: Wyoming Humanities



