

# NACDI Report

## August 5, 2008

### Introduction

The Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) is happy to report, with humility and gratitude, a successful launch year. Through diligent leadership, community ownership and stakeholder investment, NACDI has taken a strong first step in ensuring a successful future. Our commitment to strengthening American Indian self-sufficiency through asset-centered community development strategies has resulted in unique partnerships and projects. More importantly, we are beginning to seed and see community shifts from deficit and poverty-based efforts to asset and human capacity-based efforts. Our work, and the resulting partnerships and projects, are laying a critical foundation needed to transform the American Indian community to effectively respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century opportunities and challenges.

A great deal of work remains. Over the next several years, NACDI will continue to strengthen American Indian organization and stakeholder alignment and build collaborations around community and economic development strategies. NACDI will also continue to promote innovative approaches to building community assets and capacity within three primary economic sectors: Land and Housing, Entertainment and Media, and Health and Wellness. It is critical that our next steps measurably advance our goals of creating a new infrastructure and methods needed for social and economic transformation.

### NACDI Accomplishments

A great deal of initial work has been done over the past year to ensure that NACDI's mission, vision and strategic direction are being carried out. NACDI has quickly established itself as a leadership organization, anchored by a strong board of directors. Our accomplishments to date are the result of engaging and respecting the community, understanding that transformation must occur from within. It is imperative, as we continue to learn and grow, that we remain of the community.

In year one, NACDI has initiated or provided leadership to multiple community development initiatives and projects, each supporting our strategic plan. These projects include:

- **New Media Pathway**: a partnership training initiative led by MIGIZI Communications and Minneapolis Community and Technical College focused on building the capacity of young American Indian people in new media and technology.
- **NMTN/FOX American Indian Summer Institute**: a media emersion training program that sends 25+ young American Indian adults from all over the country to Los Angeles for one week. Prior to and following the training institute, Twin Cities participants receive paid training internships with local FOX affiliates.

- **American Indian Cultural and Economic Corridor Master Plan:** a community visioning and design process focused on creating a community and economic development vision and plan for Franklin Avenue and the lightrail.
- **AIOIC predevelopment project:** a partnership project with the American Indian OIC to explore their long-term development and school expansion potential around the Franklin Ave lightrail station.
- **American Indian bank on Franklin:** a partnership project with MN American Indian Chamber of Commerce focused on establishing an American Indian owned bank in the American Indian community.
- **Community Development Curriculum and Training:** a partnership project with Minneapolis Community and Technical College to develop and offer American Indian community development courses, eventually leading to a certificate and degreed program.
- **“Native Spotlight”:** a web-based communication and marketing strategy designed to increase American Indian community awareness and understanding of community development through multiple web tools, including NACDI website, blog, youtube, etc.
- **NACDI and AICDC MOU:** A memorandum of understanding between NACDI and American Indian CDC promoting cooperation in the field of housing and community development and to explore solutions and opportunities through collaborative efforts.
- **NACDI Board Retreat:** Two day retreat focused on strengthening board roles, responsibilities, and expectations and to develop board work plan.
- **Entrepreneurship Training:** A pilot project with Neighborhood Development Center to offer entrepreneurship training in the community using a Native-oriented curriculum.
- **Fiscal Agent Projects:** Provide fiscal agent and sponsorship duties to two unique projects. 1.) American Indian civil rights documentary produced by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and B&B Productions; 2.) Dakota Land Study- a research project studying the relationship of the Mdewakanton Dakota and other Dakota people in Minnesota with the land, pre 1860.

## **NACDI Funding**

NACDI has had success in securing seed funds to begin its work. Hennepin County, through the American Indian Families Project, provided initial funding and resources to launch NACDI. They continue to be a critical partner and supporter of NACDI’s vision and strategic plan.

Foundations supporting the inaugural work of NACDI, include: The Minneapolis Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, Northwest Area Foundation and Otto Bremer Foundation. In addition, revenue has been generated through fee-for-service projects. NACDI will continue to diversify its income base and explore creative ways to sustain operation.

## **NACDI Operating Infrastructure**

NACDI has established, with unusual quickness, organizational stability and community presence. Organizational infrastructure and operation has been a large part of our launch year. Some of the infrastructure tasks undertaken to support and ensure successful NACDI operations include:

- Seat 17 member NACDI Board of Directors(majority American Indian)
- File and update all IRS and state documents, including official name change
- Develop and adopt financial and personnel policies
- Secure payroll services(ADP)
- Develop and maintain financial accounting procedures (contract w/ accountant)
- Open bank and saving accounts (opened with Franklin Bank)
- Identify and secure community office space (office on Franklin Ave.)
- Purchase NACDI insurance, including directors and officers insurance
- Complete NACDI's first audit (2007 audit complete)
- File 990 (NACDI's first 990)
- Develop NACDI website ([www.nacdi.org](http://www.nacdi.org))
- Purchase office equipment
  - Computers
  - Printer
  - Phones
  - Supplies
- Secure office phone lines, fax, email, mailing address
- Prepare and host bi-monthly board meetings

## **NACDI Forecast**

Socioeconomic disparities and complexities will continue to grow and challenge the American Indian community. Government, philanthropy, and other non-profit organizations will continue to cut(and redirect) resources and redefine priorities. Individuals and families will continue to face increases in costs of living, slow job and housing markets, declining wages, and rising post-secondary tuition. Ethnic and cultural diversity will continue to grow. Population growth will continue to rise, particularly among the elderly. Private sector markets and opportunities will continue to grow. Innovation will continue to be currency of the future.

How the American Indian community decides to approach this forecast will determine its future. NACDI believes that innovative, community-based strategies for self-sufficiency and economic opportunity must be developed and supported or we will be the products of this change verses the architects of our change.

The urban American Indian community has choices to make. Each decision will determine our geographic and cultural legacy, and our socioeconomic stability. Today's American Indian leadership must focus on stabilizing the American Indian community's fragile socioeconomic foundation and advancing a new movement of community success, expectation and growth. This will require the American Indian community and its leadership to make major program, development and investment decisions. Any combination of fear, unwillingness, isolation or apathy among leadership and community organizations will result in a profoundly different American Indian community in the next ten years.

Three critical factors will determine our success in advancing a community asset-based future: 1.) organizational willingness to collaborate, 2.) organizational willingness to share resources, and 3.) organizational innovation. Collectively reorienting our goals and strategies toward building and sustaining the American Indian community's capacity to develop sustainable physical and human assets, develop economic assets and vitality, and develop and maintain effective human and social relationships through cooperative efforts will put us on a self-sufficiency path.