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RECEIVED
NOV 17 2004
MAYOR'S OFFICE
To Mr. Jim Shaw
Mayor of Rapid City
300 Sixth Street,
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mr. Shaw,
Dear Mayor of Rapid City,

We are writing to you to inform you about our **Lakota-Austrian youth exchange program**, a unique pilot project involving Lakota youth of Rapid City, South Dakota.

10 Native American students of the Rapid City School District will have the opportunity to visit Graz, Austria, for 2 weeks in June 2005. In Austria, the Native American students will serve as ambassadors, hosting workshops on Lakota life and culture in local high schools. The participants will be hosted by families, whose children attend GIBS, Graz International Bilingual School. This school is a renowned international school, whose main teaching language is English, and whose students come from various countries and cultural backgrounds, very often families of ambassadors and diplomats. The participants in our program will not only be able to experience everyday family and high school life in Austria, they will also have the opportunity to express themselves as young people growing up in Lakota culture, in this multicultural setting.

The main objectives of the youth exchange program are, to get rid of existing stereotypes on Native American cultures, to educate the German-speaking public about contemporary life in traditional and urban Lakota societies, and to promote a culturally sensitive form of tourism in South Dakota.

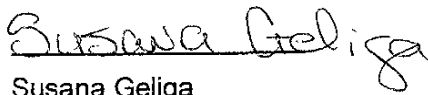
Many of our participants come from low-income families and cannot afford to pay for the trip. As a matter of fact, for most of our students, this could be the only opportunity they will ever have to visit Europe. There is no doubt that this experience will foster responsibility, self-confidence, strength and awareness of their cultural roots.

However, at this point of time, we are unable to meet the financial needs of the ~~exchange program, and are requesting your contribution in the amount of \$5,000~~ exchange program, and are requesting your contribution in the amount of \$5,000 to make this project possible.

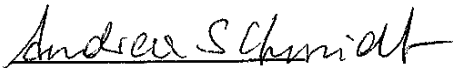
The exchange program is facilitated by the Little White Buffalo Project, a non-profit (501c3) organization. Little White Buffalo serves as a culture and language resource center, which provides opportunities for urban Native American youth to learn various aspects of the Lakota culture and establish a foundation of the Lakota language.

For further information feel free to contact Susana or Andrea (716-3200).
Additional materials are provided.

Best regards,



Susana Geliga



Andrea Schmidt

Date: 11-15-04

Additional Material

Detailed Program Description

Finance Plan

Little White Buffalo Project Folder

LAKOTA – AUSTRIAN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Educators and youth workers of Austria and South Dakota have created a foreign exchange program, which will give Lakota youth the opportunity to visit Europe in summer 2005. The committee's mission, and the purpose of the youth exchange is, to come to a better understanding of each other's cultures and life ways.

The center of the stay will be the city of Graz, Austria. The participating students will stay with local host families and will attend a local high school, *Graz International Bilingual School (GIBS)*, with their host brothers and sisters.

The focus of the youth exchange program will be Lakota cultural workshops, staged in the Graz International Bilingual School, in Graz, in South Eastern Austria. The participants will share their experience as Lakota youth in today's contemporary society.

10 Native American high school students of the Rapid City School District will be selected to participate in the youth exchange program. Some of the main requirements for being selected is a GPA of 2.5 or above, active involvement in the local Lakota community, and working towards actively promoting cultural preservation and language restoration. Besides doing the workshops, the participants will also experience Austrian high school and family life, and they will explore Austria and Southern Germany on field trips.

HISTORY: German-speaking people have always had a special interest in Native Americans. Historically, European societies were tribal and had nature-oriented spirituality such as Native Americans. Furthermore, many Europeans have discovered that their traditional ceremonies are similar to those of Native Americans. Thus, Germans have always felt a connection with Native American cultures, in particular the Lakota, making German-speaking people the most frequent European visitors to Lakota country in South Dakota. Many of them come here to rediscover the collective spirit that Lakota culture embraces.

Unfortunately, due to a distorted media input, especially by the German author Karl May, who conveyed a picture romanticizing Native American people and life, German-speaking people, and others have a very fictional and highly stereotyped view on Native Americans.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Lakota students will serve as ambassadors on behalf of the Lakota Nation, to promote cultural awareness and sensitivity, and foster global understanding.

They are going to educate German-speaking communities about contemporary life of traditional and urban Lakota people, thereby reducing the existing stereotypes.

Through active involvement and participation with Lakota youth, the German speaking youth will not only gain a deeper insight into Lakota culture, they will also attain inspiration and motivation to learn more about their own history and culture. In addition to empowerment in youth leadership, the local students will be enabled to utilize their newly gained cultural insight by putting it into the European context, and creating multi-cultural awareness in Europe.

Both student groups will learn how to use media as a tool to create and maintain cultural awareness. For instance, the youth publication in the internet www.bordercrossing.at serves as an informational pool of global youth publications, dealing with issues that youth are facing. This online magazine was created by the Graz International Bilingual School. One of the criteria for the Native American students to participate in the exchange program is to create an article to be published in an issue especially dedicated to Native American youth. Ultimately, a culturally sensitive form of tourism will be promoted

Our goal is to establish contacts that will support a long-term annual exchange program, involving Native American high school students of South Dakota and high schools in the German speaking countries. In summer 2006, we are planning to host German students here in Rapid City.

ORGANIZATION:

Susana Geliga: Little White Buffalo Project, founder and Director
Lakota language instructor at Oglala Lakota College, Rapid City
Lakota language teacher at Central High School, Rapid City, SD

Andrea Schmidt: German teacher at Stevens High School, Rapid City, SD
born in Graz, Austria
cultural mediator

Martina Pfistermueller-Czar (PhD): Graz, Austria
Teacher of English at the Graz International Bilingual School (GIBS),
our host and partner school in Austria

GIBS follows a bilingual teaching concept, according to which every school subject except of foreign languages, is taught in English. GIBS has a long experience of hosting people from different cultures. The students that attend GIBS come from countries all over the world. The official teaching language of the school is English.

Contact Information:

Susana Geliga, Andrea Schmidt
Little White Buffalo Project
PO Box 6203
Rapid City, South Dakota
57709 – 6203

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Marschallgasse 19-21
8020 Graz, Oesterreich
www.gibs.at
www.bordercrossing.at
Email: mpfist27@gibs.at

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andreaschmidt44@hotmail.com

Lakota – Austrian Youth Exchange Project

FINANCE PLAN

A) <u>Flight Costs</u>	\$ 15,600.00
13 people @ \$1,200.00 ea.	
 In Kind Fundraising	 \$ 3,850.00
student fees @ 300.00 per person (\$3,000.00)	
10 people X \$85.00 for passports (\$ 850.00)	
Total	\$- 11,750.00
 Unmet Need	 \$ 11,750.00

B) Expenses in Austria

The Graz International Bilingual School, Society of Endangered People, (Gesellschaft Fuer Bedrohte Voelker Austria) are also working to fundraise.

Travel expenses	\$ 5,000.00
transportation, and travel costs	
 Lodging for 14 days	 \$ 6,700.00
Youth hostel (\$ 1,300.00)	
13 people X \$20.00 per day @ 5 days	
Host families (5,400.00)	
10 youth X\$60.00 per day @ 9 days	
	<hr/>
	\$ 11,700.00
 In kind European Fundraising	 \$ 5,850.00
 Unmet Need	 \$ 5,850.00
 TOTAL EXPENSES:	 \$ 27,300.00

► **AMOUNT TO BE COVERED BY FUNDRAISING & GRANTS: \$ 17,600.00**

Ehani
(History/ past)

The Little White Buffalo Project began in 1999 through an Indigenous leadership program where the main objective of the program was to learn the skills to successfully develop and initiate a community-based project that would fulfill one or some of its greatest needs. . By providing opportunities for youth to gain exposure to the Lakota language and culture with education, the program has helped many, many youth to build foundations of the language and learn different aspects of the Lakota heritage.

Additionally, our activities have worked to incorporate family participation, and also building intergenerational bridges within the community. For instance, for the past three years the youth participating in the program youth have adopted all of the Lakota elders residing in our local senior centers for the holidays, and have bought them gifts or given them traditional and cultural food baskets. The Project's youth have held cultural days, and on occasion have fed the elders with the traditional and cultural foods that they've learned in the Traditional and Cultural Foods

workshops that the program offers. Additionally, the program's youth held their first wacipi (pow-wow) and community feed this year themed the 2003 Cante Skuya Wacipi (Sweet Heart's Dance or pow-wow)

Wanna
(Current program abstract)

The Little White Buffalo Project is a Lakota language and cultural education resource for Rapid City's urban Native American youth. Although the program focuses on Lakota youth, the program is also open to non-native youth and welcomes adults that want to learn about the heritage as well. The program operates year round by providing summer and after school programs that offer intensive level 1 & 2 Lakota language classes, as well as traditional foods, cultural education workshops, and cultural craft activity classes. For example we have beading workshops, and currently our youth are working on dance outfits ranging from ankle bells, shawls, and beaded earrings to traditional and fancy dance bustles.

Based on attendance and participation, the program provides supplies for all of the art projects and participants keep their completed projects. The Little White Buffalo also has a food program

that feeds snacks and meals and various much needed supplies to all of the participants of the program.

For more information or donations or how to volunteer please contact Susana Geliga at (605) 716-3200 or Fax (605) 716-3201, or at sgeliga@yahoo.com

P.O. Box 6203
Rapid City, SD 57709-6203

Location

522 7th Street, Suite 216
Rapid City, SD 57701

The Little White Buffalo Project is fiscally sponsored by Running Strong for American Indian Youth©.

Vision Statement

The Little White Buffalo Project envisions new generations of Lakota youth that are culturally and linguistically competent. Leaders that protect and seek guidance from the traditional Lakota ways of life and perspectives on self, family and community. Leaders that look to these teachings to build a strong and healthy community.

Mission Statement

The Little White Buffalo's mission is to provide educational opportunities through the Lakota language and culture for youth to establish a foundation of linguistic and cultural comprehension. To help them build and promote positive cultural and social self-images.

The Little White Buffalo Project