

Indian Energy and Economic Development

Respecting Tradition... While on the Path to Prosperity

Economic Development



Who We Are...

The Division of Economic Development helps tribes foster strong reservation economies. It seeks to create a tribal environment for economic progress, arrange training and education for tribal members to take advantage of that environment, and provide tribes with strategic advice and planning to make the most of business opportunities

What We Do...

- Identify obstacles to business and job growth in Indian country,
- Provide business management training,
- Sponsor workshops to train executives of Indian-owned businesses,
- Coordinate strategies with industry economic experts and tribal leaders,
- Bridge the gap between technology and economics,
- Provide hi-tech training to address the “digital divide”,
- Provide entrepreneurial education and financial literacy training to Native high school students,
- Create opportunities on the reservation for distance learning,
- Assist Tribes to develop the legal infrastructure needed for economic progress

Creating an environment for economic progress and promoting markets for Indian goods and services

Developing a Tribal Environment Conducive to Economic Success

Economic development in Indian Country is not possible without the rule of law embodied in strong commercial codes that secure collateral and allow the free flow of credit between persons inside and outside the reservation. The Division has therefore funded preparation and adoption of tribal uniform commercial code sections dealing with secured transactions and development of a curriculum to train tribal uniform commercial code administrators. With this help, tribes have begun adopting uniform commercial codes based on the model conceived by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and a working group of tribal officials. In addition, the Division advises tribes on enacting intellectual property and cultural patrimony protection codes and forming IRA Section 17 corporations.

Division staff are also working with tribal organizations and academia to advance thinking on comprehensive reservation planning, arguably the legal cornerstone of local and regional governance.

The traditional and the modern can exist side by side.
Photo: Walter Bonora



Training for Success

Most successful companies include cutting-edge training in their models for success. Training prepares tomorrow's business leaders. The Division has been at the forefront in bringing the best in industry and academia to work with tribal members, to prepare them for success. The Division sponsors the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College to train executives of Indian-owned firms in intensive, one-day and three-day workshops.

To compete you have to be smart

To address the "digital divide" that prevents remote reservations from enjoying access to the Internet and the global high-technology economy, the division has partnered with Fortune 500 companies and SeniorNet (the world's leading technology educator of older adults) to place new computer equipment and software and provide high-technology training at various reservation locations, called Technology Centers.

The Division also sponsors workshops to train Native Americans how to form SBA 8(a) businesses and take advantage of federal procurement opportunities, including those made possible by the Buy-Indian Act.

Tribal leaders participating at an economic summit in Phoenix, Ariz recommended the importance of risk taking, innovation and individual initiative in fostering dynamic reservation economies. The successful event, held in May 2007, was co-sponsored by IEED and the National Congress of American Indians. Since then, the Division has planned and funded entrepreneurial education for students at select reservation high schools in collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Education and the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, which trained teachers at each of the schools.

Strategic Advice and Planning

The Division has empowered tribes to assess sometimes complex economic options by funding long-term comprehensive economic development planning. It has also initiated a Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) to link tribes with advice from some of the most distinguished business, engineering and law schools in the United States. The Institute has arranged feasibility studies for tribes on potential economic development opportunities ranging from a business park, a security business, a medical supply enterprise, and an upland bird hunting operation, to new uses for a dormant tribal wellness/recreation center, a greenhouse heated by woody biomass, a tribe's potential purchase of airplane hangars, and many others.



DED worked with IBM and SeniorNet to develop a Computer Learning Center for the Tigua Tribe.
File Photo



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