

# CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

P.L. 102-477



## 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Patty Mink, Director

580-924-8280

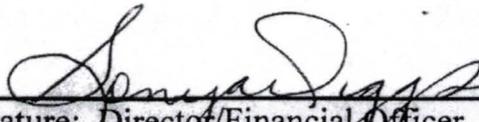
[pmink@choctawnation.com](mailto:pmink@choctawnation.com)

# CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

# Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

## FY 2013-15 Annual Financial Report Item 12 Supplement & Assurances

- 12a None of the funds in the approved budget which originated in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) were used in violation of the Act's prohibition on the use of funds for economic development activities unless the tribe has approved economic development activities pursuant to Pub. L. 106-568 Section 1103.
- 12b None of the funds in the approved budget which originated in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) were used in violation of the Act's restrictions of assisting employer relocations.
- 12c No program income was earned on 477 or Higher Education funds during this reporting period.
- 12d There was no amount of refunds or rebates received.
- 12e The total amount of administrative funds expended during this period was \$209,911.59. Total funds expended totaled \$1,659,085.88.
- 12f The total amount of Higher Education funds expended during this period was \$916,943.56.
- 12g DHHS – TANF Report  
Not Applicable

  
Signature: Director/Financial Officer

8/31/15

Date

# FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Follow form instructions)

<b>1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted</b>  DOL/DOI	<b>2. Federal Grant or Other Identifying Number Assigned by Federal Agency</b> (To report multiple grants, use IFR Attachment)  OSGT907	Page <b>1</b> of <b>1</b> pages
---	--	---------------------------------

**3. Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including Zip code)**  
 Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, PO Box 1210, Durant, OK 74701

<b>4a. DUNS Number</b> 0807358060000	<b>4b. EIN</b> 73-0717979	<b>5. Recipient Account Number or Identifying Number</b> (To report multiple grants, use IFR Attachment) 157039-157041-477 157011-Higher Education	<b>6. Report Type</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Final	<b>7. Basis of Accounting</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accrual
---	------------------------------	---	---	--

<b>8. Project/Grant Period</b> From: (Month, Day, Year) <b>7/1/2013</b>	To: (Month, Day, Year) <b>6/30/2016</b>	<b>9. Reporting Period/End Date</b> (Month, Day, Year) <b>06/30/2015</b>
--	---	---

**10. Transactions** (Cumulative)  
 (Use lines a-c for single or multiple grant reporting)

**Federal Cash (To report multiple grants, also use IFR Attachment):**

a. Cash Receipts	2533855.00
b. Cash Disbursements	2576029.44
c. Cash on Hand (line a minus b)	-42174.44

(Use lines d-o for single grant reporting)

**Federal Expenditures and Unobligated Balance:**

d. Total Federal funds authorized	2533855.00
e. Federal share of expenditures	2576029.44
f. Federal share of unliquidated obligations	
g. Total Federal share (sum of lines e and f)	2533855.00
h. Unobligated balance of Federal funds (line d minus g)	-42174.44

**Recipient Share:**

i. Total recipient share required	
j. Recipient share of expenditures	
k. Remaining recipient share to be provided (line i minus j)	

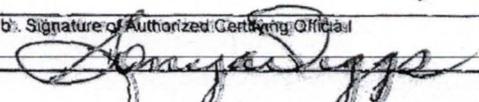
**Program Income:**

l. Total Federal program income earned	
m. Program income expended in accordance with the deduction alternative	
n. Program income expended in accordance with the addition alternative	
o. Unexpended program income (line l minus line m or line n)	

15. Indirect Expense	a. Type	b. Rate	c. Period From	Period To	d. Base	e. Amount Charged	f. Federal Share
	Fixed	23.96	10/1/13	6/30/14	453068.79	58990.06	58990.06
	Fixed	25.85	7/1/14	6/30/2015	156716.39	0	0
	<b>g. Totals:</b>				<b>609785.18</b>	<b>58990.06</b>	<b>58990.06</b>

**12. Remarks:** Attach any explanations deemed necessary or information required by Federal sponsoring agency in compliance with governing legislation.

**13. Certification:** By signing this report, I certify that it is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001)

<b>a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official</b> Sonya K. Diggs Senior Managing Accountant, Government	<b>c. Telephone (Area code, number and extension)</b> 580-624-8280 X 2351  <b>d. Email address</b> sdiggs@choctawnation.com
<b>b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official</b> 	<b>e. Date Report Submitted (Month, Day, Year)</b> 8/31/2015

Standard Form 426  
 OMB Approval Number: 1595-0091  
 Expiration Date: 10/31/2011

**Paperwork Burden Statement:**  
 According to the Paperwork Reduction Act as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1595-0091. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1595-0091), Washington, DC 20503.

**P.L. 102-477**

**2014 ANNUAL REPORT**



**EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES**

**COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES**

Patty Mink, Director

580-924-8280

[pmink@choctawnation.com](mailto:pmink@choctawnation.com)

**CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA**

# ADULT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES

## PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Growing with pride, hope and success is the motto for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Self-sufficiency has always been the primary goal of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Therefore, economic development and educating our people are very important to the Choctaw Nation.

The PL 102-477 Employment and Training services assist and deliver services throughout the 10 1/2 counties. The counties that make up Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma located in the southeastern part of the state of Oklahoma are: Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, Coal, Haskell, Hughes, Latimer, Leflore, McCurtain, Pittsburg, and Pushmataha. There are 12,108 minor members and 29,059 adult members within the Choctaw Nation boundaries in the state of Oklahoma. According to the Choctaw Nation CDIB and Tribal Membership Department, there are 174,167 enrolled members worldwide.

The Choctaw Nation field offices serve as a "one stop" for the Native American people. All of the Choctaw Nation service departments have applications at each field office. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has 16 field offices located throughout the Choctaw Nation service area. The Choctaw Nation complex is located in Durant, OK.

Oklahoma is mostly rural and no major cities are located in southeastern Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation is one of the largest employers of our area. We employ over 7,000 people nationwide and are in the process of creating many more jobs for the people in our state.

Millions of dollars are given to provide scholarships, employment and training, and career development programs to assist with expenses and educational needs for our people to become self-sufficient. Many incentive programs are provided for students to encourage academic success and perfect attendance. Sport activity camps are offered to develop additional athletic skills and sportsmanship.

The Choctaw Nation Employment and Training program collaborates with other service departments such as Higher Education, GED Program, Career Development Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, vocational development program, state college and universities, technology centers, state workforce programs and many others. Through collaboration and referrals between all programs, more opportunities are accessible to our participants with training and knowledge for future employment.

## **EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SERVICES**

The PL 102-477 Employment and Training services include but are not limited to: Work Experience, On-the-Job Training, Classroom Training, Occupational Training, Supportive Services, Career Counseling, Job Readiness Training, and Job/Referral/Direct Placement.

Placement may be made in public, non-profit, private, or tribal enterprise sectors as deemed appropriate by the program case manager. The duration of these services will vary based upon the participant's individual need, job skills, and work history. Appendix A Figure: A-1 contains the employment service percentages of participants served in Program Year 2014.

## **WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM**

The Work Experience (WE) program primarily partners with non-profit and tribal enterprises. The majority of the participants begin at minimum wage due to lack of job skills. We assisted 40 different businesses. Most job placements were at schools, city halls, Choctaw Nation, travel plazas, casinos, public libraries, and with county commissioners. We had 68 active participants. 60 have terminated from the work experience program. Many participants continued to work, found other employment opportunities, or returned to school. Appendix A Figure: A-2 contains the employment service percentages of participants served in Program Year 2014.

## **ON-THE-JOB TRAINING**

The On-the-Job Training (OJT) program is a great program for those who may not be ready to go to college or a specialized training. They are hands-on people that want to learn a skill and work. We use public, non-profit, private, or tribal enterprises when placing participants. The Choctaw Nation PL 102-477 services placed 32 participants on the OJT program. 29 of the participants have terminated and 3 remain active. There was a variety of jobs where participants were placed. Participants were placed with 22 different worksites with varying skill requirements; fabricators plants, child care, nursing homes, department stores, convenient stores, clinics, lumber companies, heat and air, and banks. We really appreciate all the local employers for giving our participants an opportunity to prove themselves and make our program a success. Appendix A Figure: A-2 contains the employment service percentages of participants served in Program Year 2014.

## **CLASSROOM TRAINING**

The Classroom Training (CRT) program collaborates very closely with Career Development, Higher Education, and Vocational Development programs. 164 students were assisted in the Classroom Training Program. 114 have terminated from the program and 79 received a certificate/degree. The program assisted 58 different training facilities: 36 Colleges/Universities,

10 technology schools, and 12 private training institutes such as; truck driving, welding, and physical therapy. The Classroom Training participant received a stipend for attending classes. The participants are required to be enrolled as a full time student and maintain a 2.0 GPA. The Classroom Training program pays tuition and books for some of the short term training. We also partner with Career Development to assist the training cost. The majority of our participants are also able to receive resources from Higher Education or Career Development. Appendix B Figure: B-1 contains the training service percentages of participants served in Program Year 2014. Appendix B Figure: B-2 contains the training completion percentages of participants served in Program Year 2014.

### **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

The PL 102-477 Employment and Training program offers supportive services to participants who have special needs or barriers for retaining their job. The majority of the supportive services provided this year were for proper clothing, footwear, certification testing, transportation, and books and tuition for short term training. Each request is considered on an individual basis and is not limited to the above examples. These services are provided through linkages and coordination of services provided by other agencies. If no resource can be utilized to meet the participants' needs, the case manager will make the request for supportive service. We assisted 59 participants with supportive service. Most of the participants requested supportive service for job related activities, fulfill clothing requirements for specialized training, or equipment associated with training or work activities.

### **UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT**

57 of the WIA applicants were able to find employment without utilizing funding available to them. These 57 applicants came in for services but found unsubsidized employment. Several needed supportive services for uniforms, tools or training for the job. After searching the internet for jobs and getting prepared for interviews, these participants were successful in their job search. Appendix A Figure: A-2 contains the employment and training services percentage of participants served in Program Year 2014.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The Higher Education Program is a scholarship and grant program for Choctaw students working toward a degree while attending an accredited college or university. Full time and part time students may receive educational assistance. During the 2014-15 school year, the Higher Education Program assisted 5,430 students with a grant or scholarship to colleges and universities throughout the United States. This year Higher Education had 1,247 students indicate they would be graduating, 217 have been verified, graduation verification is an ongoing

process. This is a problem each year as most students do not send documentation for us to report accurate numbers.

### **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

The Scholarship Program is awarded based on the student's academics, rather than financial need. A student must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 to be considered for the scholarship. Depending on where the grade point is, above the 2.5, will decide how much the student will receive per semester, up to the \$1,000.00 per semester maximum. The majority of the students applying for assistance will receive a scholarship. This year 4,255 students received educational assistance through the Scholarship Program.

### **GRANT PROGRAM**

The Grant Program is a need-based program, awarded on the student's classification in an accredited college or university. They must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 per semester. The Grant Program has a maximum award of \$800.00 per semester for senior classification. This year 989 students received education assistance through the Grant Program.

### **CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT**

The Concurrent enrollment Program is helping Choctaw high school students get a head start on credits needed for their general education courses by assisting with a book allowance. Choctaw high school students throughout the United States may apply to receive \$200.00 toward books for one class or \$400.00 if enrolled in two or more classes. Having college credits upon graduation of high school will give those students an incentive to continue after high school toward that college degree. This year 186 high school students received assistance through the Higher Education Concurrent Enrollment Program.

### **TECHNOLOGY ALLOWANCE (FORMERLY NAMED LAPTOP PROGRAM)**

The Higher Education Program made updates to the Laptop Program this past year. We started with the name, it's now the Technology Allowance. Instead of distributing laptops to the students, a check will be issued to the first 400 students meeting the eligibility requirements so the student may purchase the technology of their choice. This change was made to better assist Choctaw students in their day to day school work.

### **CHOCTAW COLLEGE CONNECT**

Higher Education was involved in the implementation of the Choctaw Nation's first college fair. It was specifically designed for Choctaw Tribal Members, over 40 colleges, universities, and

institutions attended. Over two hundred students, plus their adult guest treated to informative breakout sessions, and being able to visit with two year, four year, and Ivy League schools all under one roof. Tribal programs were on hand to share with the students what is available to them now and when they start college.

## **VETERANS**

Priority of service for veterans are based on the Jobs for Veterans Act (PL 107-288)(38 USC 4215) to provide veterans (and eligible spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the US Department of Labor, in accordance with the provisions of TEGL 5-03 (9/16/03). 100 % of the applicants who applied for Employment and Training services were placed.

The WIA program works closely with the Veterans Program to assure that all applicants who apply for Employment and Training services are placed.

The Choctaw Nation has a long and proud tradition of supporting those who defend our country. The Veterans office is to assure that veterans receive benefits and services on par with other veterans and are treated with respect and dignity by VA service providers.

The Veterans Advocacy program serves Choctaw veterans by assisting with eligibility and entitlements of veterans and their dependents.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard is a volunteer organization that recruits active and retired service members' to carry the colors at a variety of tribal and local functions. They also provide military honors at the funerals of Choctaw veterans.

The Color Guard is an integral part of the annual Veterans Day ceremony held at the annual Veterans Day ceremony held at Tuskahoma.

The Choctaw Nation is honored to be a partner with the Military Warrior Support Foundation, to provide new homes for the families of wounded soldiers.

The Choctaw Nation flight Operations under the direction of Al Cherry were recently honored for their efforts to provide air transportation to veterans all over the U.S. Wounded Veterans Airlift Command was awarded the Beacon Award. Congratulation to Al Cherry and the Choctaw Nations pilots for what they are doing for our veterans, helping and assisting those who serve God and Country.

This is just one more way the Choctaw Nation is able to give back to our veterans, who served so that we can have our freedom.

## **JOB, PARTNERSHIP, AND TRAINING (JPT)**

The Choctaw Nation is researching a core customer relations software for all programs. We are all looking forward to developing a new database that will be more convenient and compatible to programs who have similar needs and outcomes. All the programs included in the 477 program use the same software to track participant data. Our database is called Tribal Assistance Manager (TAM). The Higher Education and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program have met with our current software development firm to make enhancements to the database to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our current software application. We are very excited to say that the WIOA and Higher Education application are available online. We are in hopes that by next year only online applications will be accepted. There was a cost associated with this project but the investment for the upgrades/enhancements will streamline the reporting process making the cost minimal.

One of the initiatives the Choctaw Nation has is Going Green. Cutting down on paper usage. The integration of the online application will have incredible cost savings, improve time management and reduce paper usage. Paper applications are scanned into the database and the online application is scanned and uploaded through an automated process.

The WIA department partnered with Choctaw Nation Human Resources, Career Tech, Housing Authority, Health Programs, and Tribal Entities to sponsor Job Fair activities in the 10 ½ counties of the Choctaw Nation. This community based activity was designed to connect jobs to people and vice versa. Hence the name Job Connect. There were 14 Job Connect Fairs across the 10 ½ counties of Choctaw Nation. There were 103 applications received and numerous contacts made.

## **SUMMARY**

We strive to serve and meet the needs of all participants. Applicants who request service are asked to do a job search and prepare a resume. If they need help with interviewing or learning how to dress for success, we have a video library the participants may utilize. Many participants learn without the proper education jobs are more difficult to obtain. Often times our participants are not ready to enter a higher education program. Most of the employers in southeast Oklahoma only pay a little above minimum wage. This is not enough to feed a family. Training and job skills are key for participants to receive a higher income and become self-sufficient.

More short term training programs are needed to service the participants with an immediate employment situation. A lot of our people cannot wait one or two years to be trained in a job skill. They need to work now so they can support their family. They do not like to travel very far or be away from their families. Therefore, more short term job training programs are needed in our area.

Over all, the PL 102-477 Employment and Training program felt the majority of our participants received the enhancement they needed to obtain a job. Today's economy has placed the burden of unemployment on more people. These individuals need jobs to support them and their families. Unfortunately, jobs with compensation to fit their needs are difficult to find.

### **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has partnered with Southeastern Oklahoma State University to create Choctaw University. This training is teaching how to become better leaders and how leadership will affect the Choctaw Nation's future.

Choctaw University was designed to assist Choctaw Nation employees with personal and professional growth in gaining valuable knowledge and skills. This series of knowledge and skill coupled with a unique passion to drive our organization to create a new leadership and vision will help guide the organization into the next century.

I am very proud to say the 477 staff takes advantage of the Learning and Development Department trainings and Choctaw University.

### **CONCERNS**

We need more funding. Cost of living is going higher and higher but Federal funding for Native American programs continues to decline. Native Americans are among the nation's poorest people and live in poverty stricken areas.

We talk about how we need to invest in our young people. Where is the Native American's funding to help young people. The Native American population is among the nation's highest in dropout rates but still we get very little youth money to operate youth program in our Native Americans communities. Many Native Americans communities get 0 dollars to operate a youth program.

The biggest concern is the lack of funding for tribal entities.

Choctaw Nation is quite generous to the PL 102-477 program by supplementing the program with needed funding but many tribes are not as self-sufficient as the Choctaw Nation. Many tribes rely totally on federal funding. Without this federal funding, many programs would become unable to serve those who have such a great need for employment and training opportunities. Who will suffer? Our people, the participants will suffer! Most Native Americans are very prideful people. They do not like to ask for help but lack of funding is discouraging to the participant and the staff faced with this unfortunate situation.

Employers also bear the unfortunate burden of being able to assist those who are in need of employment. Many employers utilize the program to obtain qualified employees who they may not be able to hire due to their current budget constraints. Communities also suffer when there is no funding for job placement. Participants who are unable to work are unable to keep the local economy thriving. They do not possess the means to make purchases needed for basic survival. Surplus spending is definitely not an option for them either. Without the proper funding, we cannot help supplement a salary while they are being trained to do a specific job. Therefore, not only do we help the participant but we also help the employer and the community.

The Choctaw Nation is one of the major contributors for economic development in our state. The communities and state have seen many doors and opportunities opened because of the generosity of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The Nation has been blessed by having such a passionate and caring administration.

**CHOCTAW . . . growing with pride, hope and success**

# CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

P.L. 102-477

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES

SUPPLEMENTAL YOUTH SERVICES

Patty Mink, Director

580-924-8280

[pmink@choctawnation.com](mailto:pmink@choctawnation.com)

# **CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA**

## **SUPPLEMENTAL YOUTH / TRIBAL YOUTH**

### **YOUTH NARRATIVE**

The Supplemental Youth program is one of the best programs in our PL 102-477 plan. Native Americans from all federally recognized tribes who live in the Choctaw Nation service area and meet the federal guidelines are eligible for the program.

Through the generosity of the Choctaw Nation, Chief Gary Batton and the Tribal Council our youth program serves all Choctaw and Supplemental Youth who complete their application, meet eligibility guidelines and the application deadline. All participants meeting these guidelines and qualifications will be placed at a worksite. We have numerous youth apply for the supplemental program. However, budget cuts have caused a decline in the number of youth serviced by the supplemental program. The additional funding provided allows the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to service these individuals through our Tribal Youth program. Supplemental Youth and Tribal Youth programs are similar. The only exceptions are Tribal Youth must be of Choctaw descent and there are no income guidelines.

The PL 102-477 staff visited 70 high schools located in the 10 ½ counties. New and renewal applications were provided to all Native American students who were interested in participating in the Supplemental Youth Program. The staff reviews the application with the students, principals, or counselors of the schools to ensure all parties involved have a complete understanding of how to complete the application and know what documentation is required.

The schools are very interested in our program and welcome the visit. The schools acknowledge the benefit of the program and its effects on students and the communities.

### **JOB READINESS TRAINING/ORIENTATION**

Native American youth were provided orientation/job readiness training prior to beginning work. All participants received a student planner which serves as our resource guide, orientation, work readiness skills, educational tips, and expectations. All participants are eligible for 200 hours of Work Experience. The Work Experience training program is a five week period with an employing agency of either a private (for profit) or non-profit business. Choctaw Nation WIA department implemented a Supervisor Handbook. The Supervisor Handbook is resource guide prepared specifically for managers to increase accountability for training our native youth.

Appendix D Attachment D-1 Student Calendar and Planner is included.

Appendix D Attachment D-2 Supervisor Handbook is included.

### **ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT/CULTURAL FIELD TRIP**

This year was our 9th Annual Youth Summit. The theme was "Xtreme Yogowypi is Power".

What? That's right. "You Only Get Out What You Put In".

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 the Choctaw Nation hosted the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Xtreme Power Youth Summit. Choctaw Nation invited the ResCare Youth programs sponsored by the Southern Workforce Board to bring their participants to our youth summit. The summit was held at the Choctaw Nation Capital Grounds located in Tuskahoma, OK.

Approximately 900 students attended the summit. The program started at 10:00 am and ended around 2:00 pm. The meeting was held outside under the Choctaw Nation amphitheater which has no air-conditioning.

Karen and Lorene Crosby from Wright City beautifully sang the National Anthem in Choctaw.

Our speaker was Bill Cordes from Kansas. For the past 20 years he has been teaching teachers, teens, college students, and business profession the Yogowypi Experience. With his blend of stories, humor and audience interaction he won the audience attention and respect. He really got the students thinking their future is in their own hands.

All Choctaw Nation employees must go through Amazing Guest Service training. The participants learned the 7 Amazing guest services keys to success. They received a certificate upon completion of the training.

Choctaw Nation Career Development rolled played good and bad interviewing scenarios. They talk about how to dress, attitude, and actions, how you should answer questions and also importance of a resume'.

Participants visited with USDA, Choctaw Nation Career Development, Kiamichi Technology Centers, Choctaw Nation Higher Education, Making a Difference, and Amazing Guest Service. These programs had very useful information to hand out to give the participants.

After lunch student planners were handed out. Each counselor met with their participants and went over forms, timesheets, timelines, and answered any questions that were asked.

After the counselors were finished with orientation they loaded their bus and departed for home about 2:00pm. Mother Nature was good to us. It was a beautiful day with a light wind and no one complained about being hot.

I would like to thank Real Property for coming and grilling hot dogs for the event and also the WIOA/Higher Education staff for helping with setting up tables and chair for the vendors and also serving the food. Southern Workforce Board for volunteering their time to help with the summit. Thank you to the area schools for allowing us to borrow busses to transport the youth to Tuskahoma, and all the vendor for believing in our youth and spending the day with us.

Through partnerships this event has been very successful.

The agenda and pictures taken during the summit can be found in Appendix D Attachment(s): D-3.

### **PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS**

#### **POSSE – K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

The Partnership of Summer School Education (POSSE) is a Choctaw Nation initiative that partnered with local school districts within the geographical boundaries of the Choctaw Nation. The program is designed to provide summer intervention in reading and math for any PK-3 student attending a public school within the boundaries.

This program was designed for those students not meeting the reading benchmark at the end of third grade a more intensive, individualized instruction in reading and literacy. Special focus is given to the reading elements of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

The summer school has a blended approach offering both academic opportunities and enrichment activities. Field trips and other special events are designed each year to help expose students to opportunities that may not have otherwise.

Research shows that students who do not possess the expected reading skills for their grade level often fall behind their peers, making it difficult to regain lost ground without intensive intervention. Since Oklahoma students are not required to attend Pre-K, many children are already behind when they enter kindergarten.

Reading and math assessments are administered at the beginning of the summer session to determine baseline data and again at the end of the summer session to determine growth.

The key component of the POSSE initiative is the development of a summer math and reading intervention program for students. Selection of eligible students is based on the end of the year math and reading assessment benchmark scores or teacher recommendation.

In 2015, the Partnership of Summer School Education (POSSE) program for students in grades K-3 expanded to 14 sites that included 23 school districts. The 2015 enrollment in the POSSE program quadrupled to 1827 students. Early indicators show that the students made significant progress in reading and math. Students also enjoyed the afternoon enrichment classes, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) activities, and the educational field trips.

The Nation will continue to partner with local districts to increase the duration, intensity, and scope of the traditional summer school program to a comprehensive research-based, 6-week, full-day model that makes summer an essential component of district school reform strategy.

The Supplemental/Tribal youth program was honored to have # youth participate as mentors, teacher assistant, and activities leaders. The experience opened up their hearts to what a teacher experiences every day. Many have expressed that would like to go into the teaching field.

Here are a few pictures and success stories from participants and teachers.

Program pictures can be found in Appendix E Attachment: E-1.

It Starts Now – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Discovery Day

Choctaw Nation partnered with the Southern Workforce Board, and Southeastern Oklahoma State University to sponsor our first Career Discovery Day.

The idea behind Career Discovery Day was sparked by a visit to Senator Susan Paddack's Office at the Oklahoma state capital by Mike Southard, President & CEO of the Ada Jobs Foundation. Two high school students shadowing Senator Paddack was asked what their future career plans were. Their answers illustrated a disconnect between awareness of available jobs, training requirements for these jobs, and how students could utilize existing programs to receive training before graduation.

A taskforce was organized to develop a program to address these disconnects among students in Pontotoc County. After some research, Senator Paddack learned that the eighth grade year is the pinnacle year to address a student's future goals and plans. By showcasing career opportunities and programs for training to students before they reach high school, there is a greater likelihood of them staying in school and being work ready once they graduate.

A taskforce was organized to oversee the entire program consisted of representatives from: area school districts, technology center, businesses, economic development agencies, chamber of commerce, universities, workforce board, and tribal entities.

Four committees were created to oversee various aspects of the program. These committees included: Logistics Committee, Business Committee, Education Committee, and Follow-up Committee.

Every eighth grade student in Pontotoc County attended an opening session, a general session which covered soft skills, three breakout sessions based on their career interests, and a closing session which reviewed what they had learned during the day.

The program has proven to be a huge success and the Southern Workforce Board's Youth Council decided to do a pilot program in Bryan County with all eighth graders.

The event was held at Southeastern Oklahoma State University on January 8, 2015.

600 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from 9 schools attended.

The Education Committee was responsible for conducting career interest assessments, coordinating and communicating with all school districts, and informing parents about the event and the parent meeting.

The Education Committee relied on assistance from school counselors and career counselor from the Choctaw Nation to conduct all the Career Interest Assessment. The Interest Assessment determined the most popular career choices the eighth graders chose. The students were given surveys to select 4 career choices. Students attended workshops from their top three career choices.

The Logistics Committee was responsible for securing the event venue, organizing the event schedule, classifying students by career interest, creating individual schedules for students. There are plans to continue and add another county next year in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Discovery Day Career Fair. It Starts Now.

The Business Committee was responsible for securing speakers in career interest categories, developing a soft skills presentation, recruiting sponsors, educating speakers on what topics to discuss, and assisting with securing business commitments for post-event activities.

At opening session the students received information about the different education options, budgeting and soft skills that would be needed to get and keep future jobs.

There were 28 speakers who discussed their career, the educational pathways, salaries, etc. to the students who had selected that career.

The Follow-up Committee was responsible for conducting parent meetings held at the local schools after the event so that parents would get the information on educational opportunities available to the students and how important it was for them To Start Now.

I would like to thank the local school systems for allowing their students to participate in the Career Discovery Days, the local businesses and employers who share their career goals, the Choctaw Nation, Southern Workforce Board and SOSU for hosting this successful event.

## Stem Academy – Out of School Youth

The Southern Workforce Board, Inc. received a grant to promote STEM awareness to eligible youth within their 17 county service area to meet the emerging need and evolving industry needs. STEM challenge academies were offered with an emphasis on engineering, design, applied mathematics, programming and other technology related activities, stem career pathways, workplace competencies and work experience.

Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology conducted summer STEM academies using STEM education and Apple iPad technology for youth participating in summer programs under the Workforce Investment Act.

Collaborative partnerships were formed with Workforce Oklahoma system partners, business and industry, Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes, public and private education and training providers.

6 camps were schedule in different locations throughout the 17 counties.

At the camps they were introduced to Stem – what it is and how it works in our everyday lives. The instructor is young and they related well to him. He had the class introduce themselves and had each one tell what their goals were.

He also showed videos that got the kids to thinking about how STEM is used in almost everything we do.

They got to build a bomb demolish robot – This was also to demonstrate that they had to work together to build it.

On the second day, participants learned soft skills such as resume writing. The instructor discussed the importance of doing a good job and being punctual. Participants used Apple ipads during applied application activities.

He discussed with them the different STEM occupations and that they do not have to go to a 4 year college but it is okay to get certifications from Career Tech too. He demonstrated the wage difference as well.

The participants were learning while also having fun.

We were excited to have 4 participate from Choctaw Nation. I have included a couple of success stories regarding the STEM camp.

Program pictures can be found in Appendix F Attachment: F-1.

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

We are blessed to have the Tribal funding to help supplement our youth program. The WIA served 1548 youth from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. 553 prior participants terminated from the program. Many participants get hired by their employers for a few weeks after the program end.

The majority of our youth returned to school. Summer youth participants who participate in the program are placed on leave of absence status at the end of the program. Reactivation of the participants reduces error and time needed to place the vast amount of participants. The majority of participants return to the work on the program each year. The next spring, returning participants will update their application and proceed with another great year.

The policies were changed for the 2015 Youth Work Program. A decision was made to provide this employment opportunity to students between the ages of 16 – 21. New applicants are required to be 16 years of age by the first day of work. Child Labor Laws in Oklahoma are quite stringent making it quite difficult for students who are 14 – 15 to participate in traditional work activities. PY 2015 assisted 925 participants and 553 worksites.

Employers are seeking individuals with good communication skills, honesty, work ethic, professionalism, positive attitude and self-motivation. With the new age limit being raised, the employers can treat our employees as they would any of the other employees that works for them without worrying about the Child Labor Laws.

All kids are at risk and we need more programs to help them get ready for the future, workforce, and the real world.

A graphical representation of the participants served by county can be found in Appendix H Figure: G-1.

## **SUMMARY**

One of my greatest concerns is funding. All you hear is how the youth are our future and we need to invest in our youth. Many of the tribal programs from across the nation depends totally on federal funding but very few receive youth money to operate a youth program. In fact, approximately \$12,000,000.00 was set aside for youth programs this year for the Tribal programs.

We have a large number of participants that qualify for the federal program but we do not have enough funding to provide services to all. Our federal youth funding covers only one payroll

period. The Choctaw Nation Tribal Program provides the remaining funding to pay the students the following three weeks.

The Choctaw Nation encourages and offers numerous education programs for our people to stay in school and get their education. Therefore, the Choctaw Nation offers their youth work experience program during the summer months.

The PL 102-477 program is blessed to have a caring administration. Chief Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr. and the Choctaw Tribal Council are wonderful. They truly care for our youth and our communities. This program has an impact on the youth, their families, and gives back to the communities. Our local businesses are very cooperative in helping/training our youth. They give them the opportunity to become a part of the workforce. Without the supplemental funding the tribe gives our program, we would not be able to help the young people or the businesses. We must invest time, money and help our young people. After all, "Youth are Tomorrow's Future."

All of our participants received an exit sheet at the end of the program from their worksite supervisor, and many participants received a letter of recommendation from their supervisor.

I have enclosed a few letters of support from employers, letters of recommendation, and several participants wrote a statement about what the program has done for them.

I hope you enjoy the success stories, counselor's comments and worksite photos.

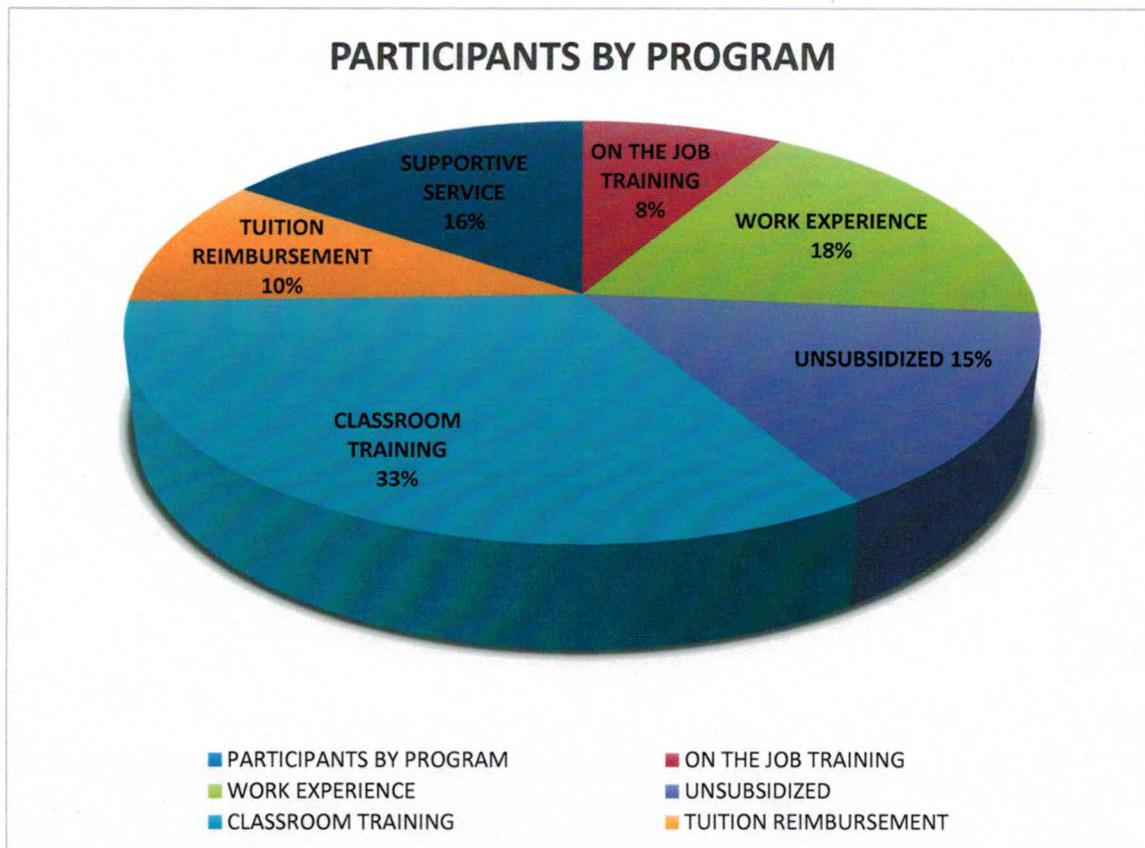
Appendix I Attachment(s): H-1.

# Appendix

## Appendix A

**Figure: A-1**

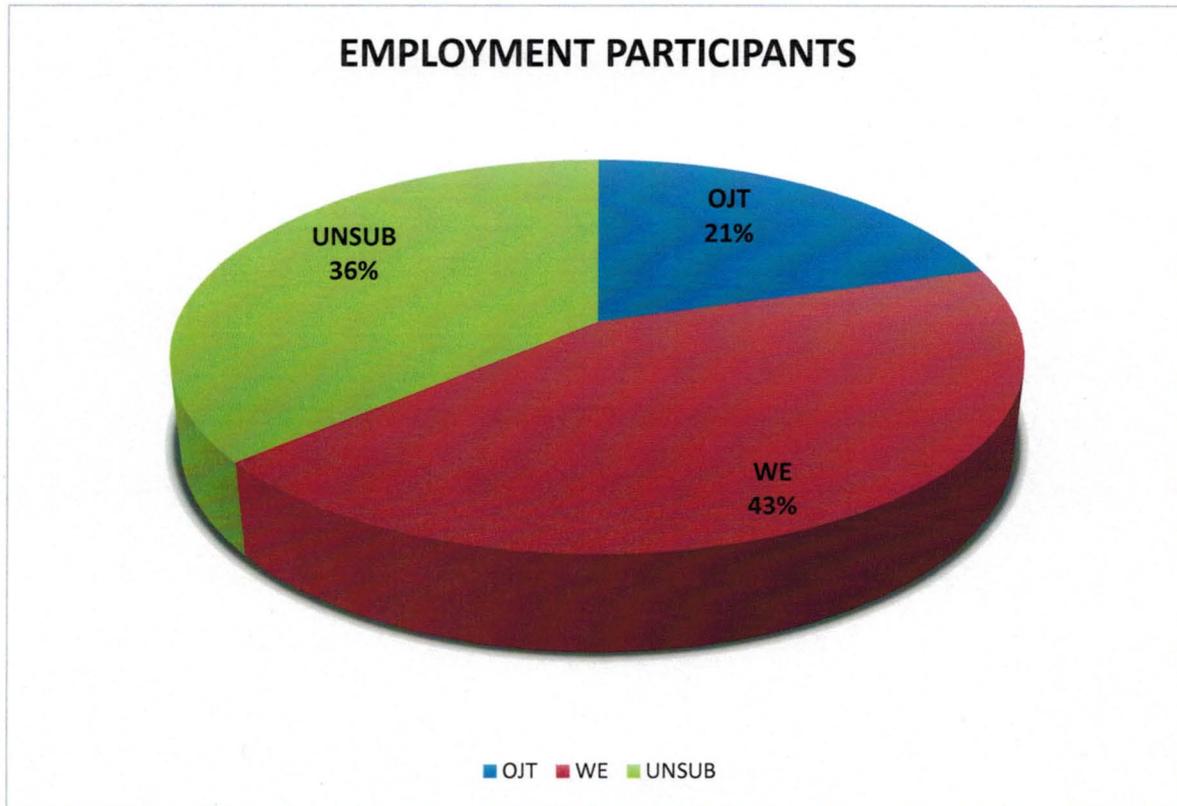
The figure below depicts the percentage of clients served by the Supportive Service, On-the-Job Training, Classroom Training, Tuition Reimbursement, Work Experience and Unsubsidized Programs as of June 30, 2015. The number of clients served from 2014 to 2015 remained steady from one year to the next.



<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>CLIENT TOTALS</u>
ON-THE JOB TRAINING - (OJT)	32
WORK EXPERIENCE - (WE)	68
UNSUBSIDIZED - (UNSUB)	57
CLASSROOM TRAINING - (CRT)	126
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT - (TUITION)	38
SUPPORTIVE SERVICE	59

**Figure: A-2**

The figure below depicts the percentage of clients served by On-the-Job Training, Work Experience and Unsubsidized Programs as of June 30, 2015. Job placements for the Work Experience Clients included schools, city halls, Choctaw Nation and its entities as well as public libraries and County Commissioners. On-the-Job Training Clients placements ranged from farms to accounting offices. Unsubsidized clients were able to locate their own position and were assisted with Supportive Service needs for uniforms, tools or other training needs.

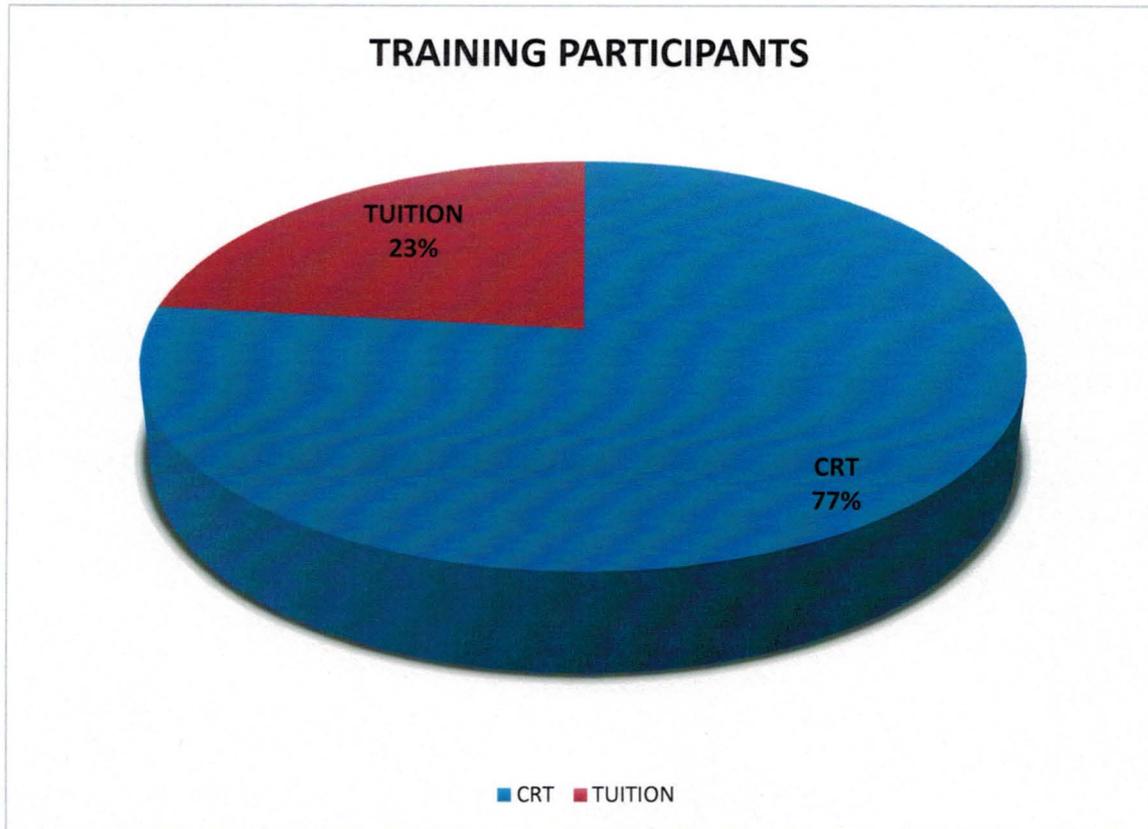


<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>CLIENT TOTALS</u>
ON-THE JOB TRAINING - (OJT)	32
WORK EXPERIENCE - (WE)	68
UNSUBSIDIZED - (UNSUB)	57

**Appendix B**

**Figure: B-1**

The figure below depicts the percentage of clients served by the Classroom Training Program. Classroom Training contains tuition reimbursement as well as a bi-weekly stipend (CRT) issued to the client for meeting or achieving class requirements. The Classroom training program assisted 41 training facilities including colleges/universities, technology schools, and specialized training facilities, i.e. truck driving and physical therapy. In addition to the 41 training facilities, 164 clients were assisted, 50 of those remain active on the Classroom Training Program.

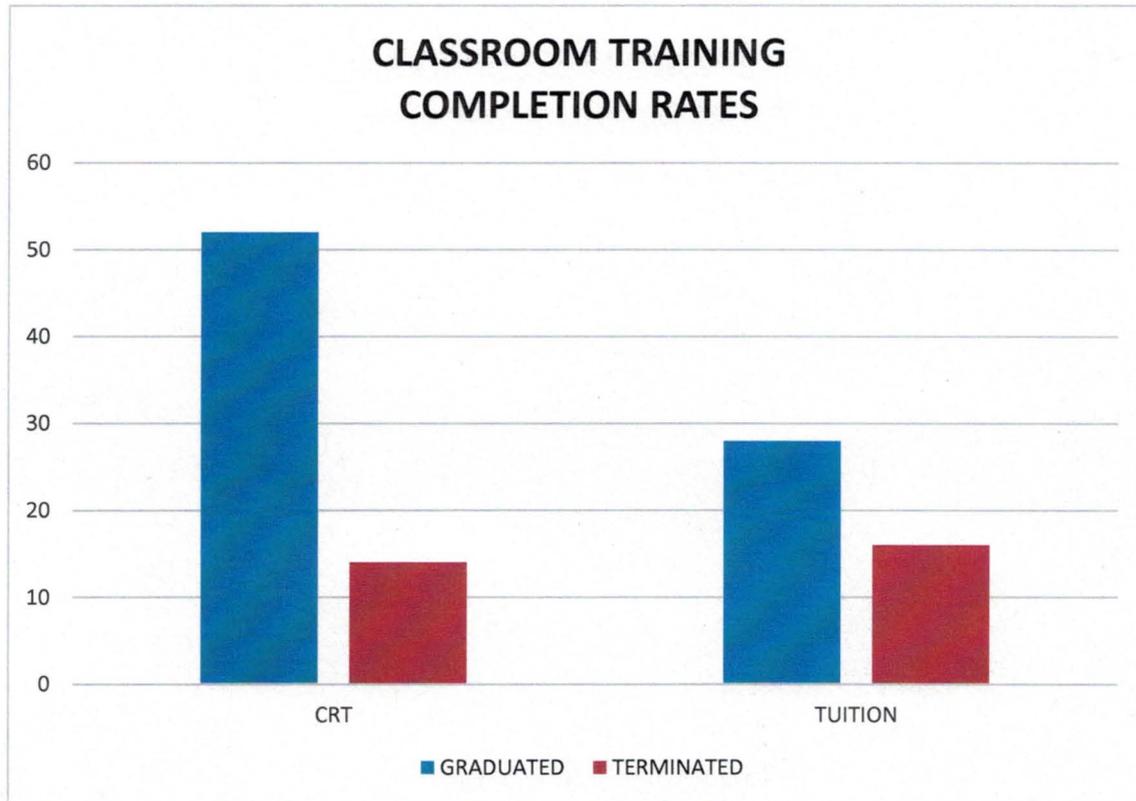


<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
CRT	126
TUITION	38

**Appendix B**

**Figure: B-2**

The figure below contains 110 Classroom Training clients terminated during the 2014 Program Year and completion of the certificate/degree. 80 total participants received a certificate/degree the remaining clients either discontinued the program or re-entered the workforce.

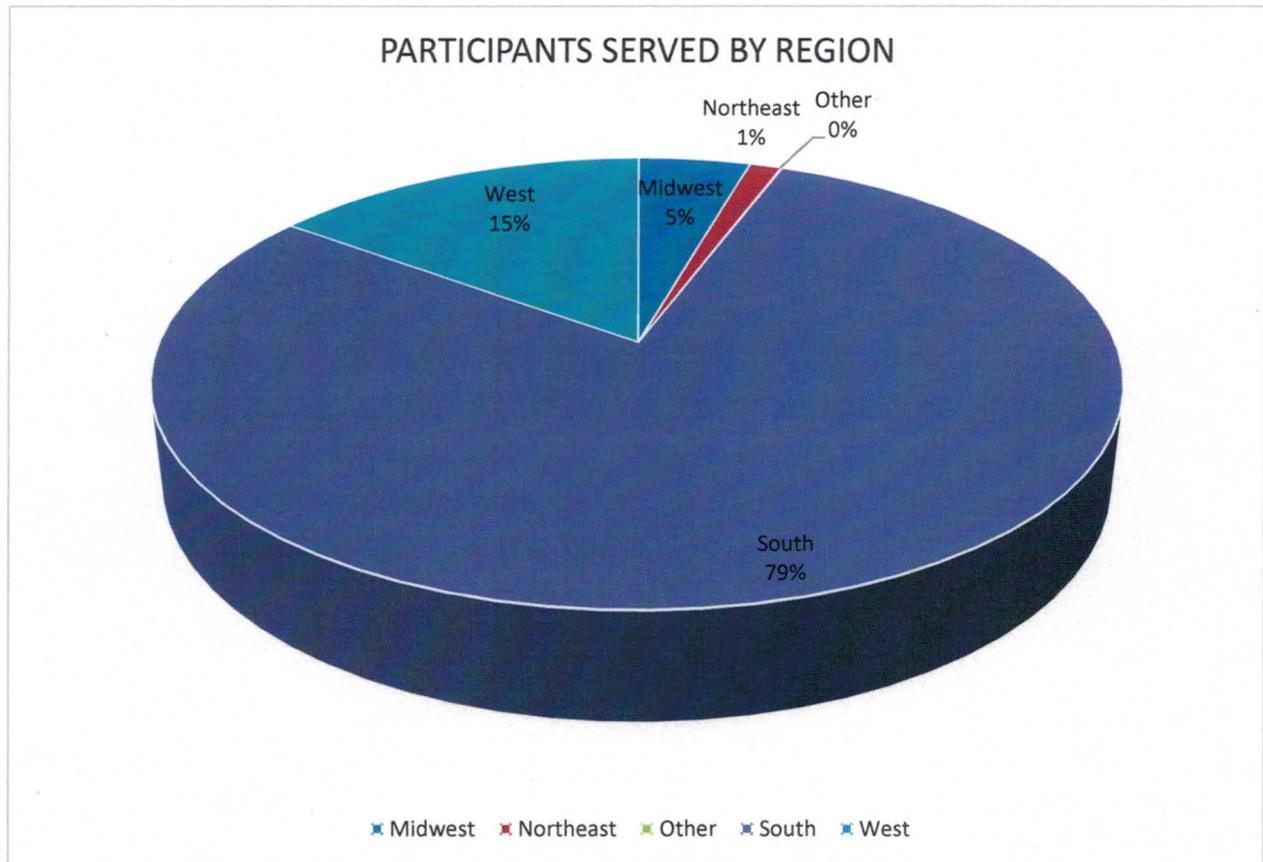


<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>GRADUATED</u>	<u>TERMINATED</u>
CRT	52	14
TUITION	28	16

**Appendix C**

**Figure: C-1**

The figure below contains the percentage of participants Higher Education served in a geographic region for Program Year 2014.



**Attachment: C-2**

REGION	DIVISION	STATE
MIDWEST	EAST NORTH CENTRAL	Illinois Indiana Michigan Ohio Wisconsin
	WEST NORTH CENTRAL	Iowa Kansas Minnesota Missouri Nebraska North Dakota South Dakota
NORTHEAST	MID-ATLANTIC	New Jersey New York Pennsylvania
	NEW ENGLAND	Connecticut Maine Massachusetts New Hampshire Rhode Island Vermont

REGION	DIVISION	STATE
OTHER	OTHER	AE, APO, DC
SOUTH	EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	Alabama Kentucky Mississippi Tennessee
	SOUTH ATLANTIC	Delaware Florida Georgia Maryland North Carolina South Carolina Virginia West Virginia
	WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	Arkansas Louisiana Oklahoma Texas
WEST	MOUNTAIN	Arizona California Colorado Idaho Montana Nevada New Mexico Utah Wyoming
	PACIFIC	Alaska Hawaii Oregon Washington

**Appendix D**

**Attachment: D-1**

Youth Participant Orientation Guide and Handbook (Student Planner).

**Attachment: D-2**

Supervisor Orientation Guide and Handbook.

**Attachment: D-3**

Orientation/Summit Photos

**Appendix E**  
**Attachment (s): E-1**

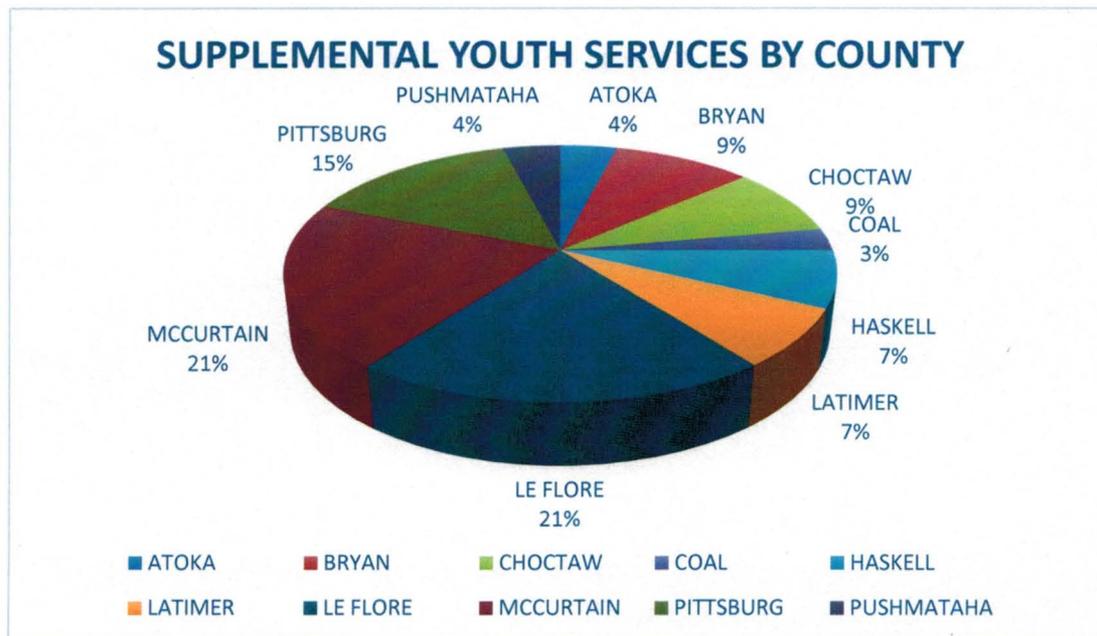
Partnership of Summer School Education (Posse) Program Overview.

**Appendix F**  
**Attachment: F-1**

STEM Academy – Out of School Youth

**Appendix G**  
**Attachment: G-1**

The figure below contains the percentage of Supplemental Youth Participants assisted by the Work Experience Program for the Program Year 2014 in the Choctaw Nation service area.



**Appendix H**  
**Attachment(s): H-1**

Success stories, counselors comments and worksite photos.

**Appendix I**  
**Attachment(s): I-1**

Higher Education

