

FROM THE COMMUNITY



Program Coordinators share responses from water tank recipients:

"One elderly couple that received a tank in Leupp actually cried, saying 'this going to help us so much, you have no idea' and that delivery just really stuck with me."

"One of the gentlemen in Chinle said he delivered water to all his family members, and his tank was really old, past the point of being able to be cleaned, and he was worried every time he dropped water off to his relatives that maybe it wasn't safe. He was so grateful to receive the tank, because he said now he didn't have to worry about potentially harming his family when he dropped off water."

"Every single person said basically the same thing: 'wow this is amazing- we've been wanting one of these for so long but they are just so expensive! Thank you!'"

VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT

Remembering Angie James | 07/01/1955 - 10/22/2021

Red Feather mourns the loss of one of our strongest advocates and a remarkable spokesperson for people with disabilities. Angelina James was instrumental in helping Red Feather launch our Weatherization Workshops. When we first started teaching workshops at Hopi, Angie stepped right up to volunteer to help. She helped spread the word about the benefits of weatherization and our workshops, ensuring the classes were always filled. Attending many of the workshops herself, she provided invaluable assistance with Hopi language translations and feedback on our curriculum making the workshops much more accessible to the people in her community. Despite having health issues of her own, she was tireless in her support and advocacy for people with disabilities. Angie was a bridge that a tremendous amount of good traveled across and will remain an inspiration to us all.



THE BIG PICTURE

This article is the fifth article in the series—**The Promise of Targeted Universalism: Community Leaders Respond**—published by Non-Profit Quarterly in partnership with the national racial and economic justice nonprofit Prosperity Now. Excerpts reprinted here with permission, read the full article at nonprofitquarterly.org

—Red Feather Board President Chrystel Cornelius and co-author Krystal Langholz

"...Native peoples in the US often are invisible. In the 2020 election cycle, Native communities found themselves categorized by CNN as "Something Else" in its election reporting... This invisibility extends to a lack of data. Federal data on Native American wealth is not available. In fact, the last time that we saw national research that included Native Americans in the conversation a decade ago, Native families only held eight cents of wealth for every dollar owned by the average white American household..."

We're still fighting to protect our sacred land and water. And we have a call to action for thousands of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Our lives, economies, and land are afterthoughts—if we're lucky—to mainstream US society and philanthropy.

The Native financial sovereignty movement acknowledges that nothing will change for Native communities without Native families having access to homeownership and Native small businesses having access to capital. These community-driven financial institutions help their borrowers navigate the bureaucratic systems steeped in inequities that continue to sideline—and redline—Native communities.

We are also learning to state our case in new ways: what is good for Native Americans is good for all Americans. While this feels like it should be an obvious statement in both its moral truth and pragmatism, it is not intuitive for many. Maybe here, in this recognition of our common humanity, there is room for discussion of adopting universal goals, even as we preserve the vast cultural diversity that characterize the 574 federally recognized nations that constitute Indian Country.

As to the moral imperative, in Lakota, you would say it this way: **Mitakuye Oyasin**—we are all related. This belief is held sacred in almost every Indigenous community in the country. Our liberation, survival, and strength rely on one another. What is good for tribal nations is good for our states, our country, and the world."

Read the full article at: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/no-one-is-coming-to-save-us-forging-paths-to-native-financial-sovereignty/>



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RED FEATHER

Newsletter SPRING 2022

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HEADING INTO SUMMER MEANS GEARING UP FOR MAJOR HOME REPAIRS! WE ARE LINING UP HOME HEALTH AND SAFETY REPAIR PROJECTS ACROSS BOTH THE HOPI AND NAVAJO NATIONS WHILE ALSO EXPANDING OUR DIRECT SOLUTIONS PROGRAM WHICH PROVIDES IMMEDIATE FIXES, FROM NEW APPLIANCES TO MONEY FOR MATERIALS.

AS THE COVID-DRIVEN SPOTLIGHT ON THE TRIBES FADES, SO DOES THE HUGE SWELL OF FUNDING.

BUT THE REALITY IS THAT THE NEED REMAINS.

WE RELY ON INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS FOR A HUGE PART OF OUR OPERATING BUDGET.

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Red Feather Development Group



From The Ground



ELIZABETH FREEMAN
Program Coordinator



Interview with Elizabeth: FINDING THE CELEBRATION, THE CARE, AND THE POWER IN OUR WORK

Red Feather Program Coordinator Elizabeth Freeman speaks on the power of re-centering, the need to celebrate success, incorporating education into everything we do, and when a home assessment is so much more than a home assessment.

' Since we've grown our Direct Solutions program, which provides a limited budget for home repair materials for families across both Hopi and Navajo, we've seen a huge increase in the number of calls and applications. It's been exciting but it's also been a lot! Remembering the big picture is essential for me when I get overwhelmed with the amount of demand we are facing, or the amount of calls that come in during the day. People are facing a lot, and this is our way of doing something immediately, of meeting immediate need. The growing of the Direct Solutions program is intended to be that, and in so many ways it is succeeding. Acknowledging and celebrating that re-centers me.

' Despite the struggles, we are doing so much good work. I mean, we are really doing SO MUCH, reaching so many homes. And sometimes, in the constant drive to do more, we don't always take the time to stop and spotlight and celebrate what we are doing, which is so important. Because we are reaching a lot of people. When you are as dedicated as we are to trying to help and to serve, it can be overwhelming to come in in the mornings and just see 'oh, I have 30 missed calls and 50 new emails' but the power is in realizing that these are all people we are reaching and people that will be helped.

' I'm a big believer in stopping to recognize accomplishments and celebrate them. The truth is that Red Feather has grown a lot and is doing amazing work, so let's acknowledge and get joy out of that too, while also recognizing that of course there will always be more work to do.

' "I'm so big on encouragement and recognizing accomplishments. I don't think anyone should undersell what they've managed to overcome or succeed at, and that goes for both our employees and those that we serve. People just need to hear "You are doing fantastic!" and this can start a positive cycle of encouragement and self-belief. As we are focusing on meeting these immediate physical needs in the home through our Direct Solutions program, there's this other side too of just making sure people feel seen and acknowledged, I think this is something we all need.

' When we are in the field a lot, we have to focus on the negative aspects. When you are doing home assessments, you have to look for what is wrong in the home in order to find what is most needed. So this sort of negative focus has to be there, and especially when you are working in communities with endemic poverty and centuries of oppression and trauma, sometimes it's easy to see only that, to stay in the negative, to just be in the thought process of "how did people get to this point?".

' But there is such a powerful mindset switch we can do too. Like yes, when we are doing home assessments we focus on the negative, but there is also space for the positive in our interactions.

' This is where our education programs come in, because there is a space for change and hope and possibility when people have life tools and not just home fixes. Knowledge cannot be taken away from you. There are so many types of education too, you don't have to have a degree to gain knowledge.

' At Red Feather, what we want to do is also provide a pathway to the power of knowing that you can take care of yourself. I think that there are many layers to things, and yes its great to have your home fixed, to have heating, to get these needs met, but then there is the deeper emotional level, also the emotional healing, that can come from a feeling of "I can take care of myself."

' This is how I see our programs coming together. We all have a hierarchy of needs. With the Direct Solutions program, and also our HHESI and other home repair programs, we target that base layer on the Maslow pyramid of needs. We all need a home, we need somewhere to sleep, somewhere safe to be, to be warm. Of course we all need that.

' But I don't want to just leave someone with a healthy home kit and call it a day. We are trying to leave people with something that they can use, that they can pass on to the next generation, that can have a longer-lasting impact.

' I mean, look, we are trying to address this major, age-old housing crisis on the Hopi and Navajo reservation. That's what Red Feather is here for. But how can we move from just immediate crisis response to preparation, to prevention? I think that incorporating education, financial literacy, all of it, into everything we do is key.

' It is my intention and hope that people pass this all on to their kids, that we can all become better examples, that the next generation has something more to work with.

' My hope is that I can give people the tools, the resources, so that when tough situations come up they have something to throw at that, to address that. We are working on this as a key aspect of our programs at Red Feather all the time.

' People's actions reflect their mindset and their current emotional state. There's always a reason for why people are in the situation that they're in. We all express our needs in different ways. We don't always know what people have gone through, but we are all human. Having one's needs be ignored is a kind of neglect, and at its most basic what we do at Red Feather is try to see people's needs, to make sure that people know we are seeing their needs. That they've been noticed, that someone cares, that they've been heard.

' It might seem simple, like we just provided someone with a smoke alarm, fixed their window, gave them a safer stove, but in this context of deep historical and cultural trauma, what I think this can also give, or at least I hope this can also give, is a sense that at least someone saw me today, cared about the situation I was in. At least, if no one else did today, Red Feather saw that need and tried to do something, cared, was there to be present. '

EVERYONE DESERVES A HEALTHY HOME

Larry and Anna Bennet reached out to Red Feather in February after reading about the urgent need for heating solutions in our last newsletter. After thoughtfully corresponding with Red Feather staff about how they could make the most impact, they generously decided to contribute a matching fund for electrical upgrades, since the most efficient and effective heating devices we provide, mini-split heating and cooling pumps, require safe and standard electrical systems. Even if we have funding for a mini-split, but a home doesn't have the necessary electrical wiring, we can't provide this solution to families. Thanks to this initiative from the Bennets, and Foothills Bank who jumped in to match their gift, this gap will be filled for at least 5 families, unlocking up to \$10,000 in additional funds per home and allowing them to get mini-splits for warm homes in the winter and cool homes in the summer. **THANK YOU!**



PROGRAM METRICS

TOTAL FAMILIES THAT RECEIVED FIREWOOD HELP OVER THIS PAST HEATING SEASON: 145

STOVES REPLACED LAST YEAR IN THE 4-CORNERS STOVE SWAP-OUT PROGRAM: 36

NUMBER OF WATER STORAGE TANKS DELIVERED TO FAMILIES TO IMPROVE AT-HOME WATER SECURITY THANKS TO DIG DEEP'S WATER IS LIFE FUND: 52

FAMILIES WE CAN NOW REACH WITH HOME REPAIR MATERIALS OR LABOR TO FIX MOST URGENT HOUSING NEEDS THANKS TO OUR DIRECT SOLUTIONS PROGRAM



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